The Saga of Thrond of Gate

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Chapter 1

There was a man named Grim Camban. He first settled the Færeys in the days of Harold Fairhair. For before the king's overbearing many men fled in those days. Some settled in the Færeys and began to dwell there, and some sought to other waste lands. Aud the deeply wealthy fared to Iceland, and on her way thither she came to the Færeys, and there she gave Olof the daughter of Thorstan the Red in marriage: whence is come the greatest lineage of the Færey-folk, whom they call the Gatebeards, that dwell in Eastrey.

Chapter 2

Thorbeorn was the name of a man who was nicknamed Gatebeard. He dwelt in Eastrey in the Færeys; Gudrun was the name of his wife. They had two sons. The elder was named Thorlac, but the younger Thrond. They were likely men. Thorlac was both tall and strong; so far Thrond was like him when he was full grown, but there was a great unlikeness between the two brothers. Thorbeorn was a wealthy man, and was already old when these things came to pass. Thorlac took him a wife there in the islands, but he dwelt at home with his father at Gate. Now, soon after Thorlac was married, Thorbeorn Gate-beard died, and he was laid in the barrow and buried after the old way; for in those days all the Færey-folk were heathens. His sons shared the heritage between them, and each of them wanted to have the homestead at Gate, for that was the greatest treasure. So they cast lots for it, and the lot fell to Thrond. After the lot fell, Thorlac begged Thrond to let him have the homestead, and himself take the more part of the chattels; but Thrond would not do that. Then Thorlac went abroad, and gat him another dwelling there in the islands. Thrond let out the land at Gate to many men, and took the highest rent; and in the summer he took ship, albeit he had little merchandise, and fared to Norway, and there he had his dwelling through the winter, seeming always moody of mind.

In those days Harold Grayfell was ruling over Norway. Next summer Thrond fared south to Denmark with certain merchantmen, and came to Haleyre while the summer still lasted. There was at that time a very great gathering of people. And it is said that ever there comes thither the greatest gathering of men of all the Northlands while the market stands. In those days King Harald Gormsson, who was called Blue-tooth, ruled over Denmark. King Harald was at Haleyre that summer, and a great following with him. Two of the king's henchmen [brethren] are named of them that were there with him. The one was named Sigurd, the other Harec. These brothers went together into the market to buy them the best and biggest gold ring they could find. They came into a booth that was right well stocked, and in it there sat a man who greeted them well, and asked them what they would buy. They said they wished to buy a gold ring, both big and good. He said that there was a good choice there. Then they asked him his name, and he said his name was Holmgar the Wealthy. Then he unpacked his treasures, and showed them a thick gold ring. The greatest treasure it was, but it was so dear they could not see how they were to get all the silver that he wanted for it there on the spot; so they begged him to wait till the morrow for it, and he agreed to do so. And with that they went off, and so the night passed. Now in the morning Sigurd went forth out of his booth, but Harec stayed behind; and after a while Sigurd came outside to the edge of the tilt and called out. "Kinsman Harec," said he, "give me here quickly the purse with the silver in it, that we got ready for buying the ring, for the bargain is just struck; but do thou wait here the while and take care of the booth. "Then he [Harec] gave him the silver out through the edge of the tilt.

Chapter 3

Now not long after this Sigurd came into the booth to his brother, and said, "Take thou now the silver, for the bargain is just struck. "He answered him, "I gave thee the silver a short while ago. ""Nay," said Sigurd, "I have had none of it. "Then they began to wrangle about it, but afterwards they went and told the king about it, and the king and other folk soon saw that their money had been stolen. Then the king laid his ban on all that were there, that no ship should sail thence while things stood in this way. And many thought this a great hinderance that they should be bound to stay there after the market was over. Whereupon the Northmen held a meeting among themselves to take counsel over it. Thrond was at their meeting, and he called out, "Men are sorely lacking in counsel here. "Then they asked him, "Knowest thou counsel for this case?""So it seems," says he. "Put forth thy counsel!" said they. "It must be paid for, then," he said. They asked him what he wanted for it. He answered, "Each of you must give me an ounce of silver. "They said that was a great deal. But they made this bargain withal, that each man should give him half an ounce there in hand, and another half ounce afterwards if his counsel turned out well. Now the next day after this the king held a moot, and spake to this end there, that no man whatever should leave the haven till all about the theft was found out. Then there stood up to speak a certain young man; he had a shock head of red hair, and was freckled of face and right grim of look, and he called out, "Men are mighty badly off for counsel here," says he. The king’s counsellors asked him what counsel he saw for the matter. He answered, "This is my counsel, that every man that is come here lay down so much silver as the king shall say, and when that money is got together in one place, then they shall be paid out of it who have suffered this harm, and that which remains over the king shall take to himself for his fee, and I know he will be well pleased with his share; and men will lie here no longer as though they were weather-bound, to their great hinderance, such a crowd as have come together here. "This was quickly taken up by the whole people, and they said they would sooner lay out their money in feeing the king than sit there to their hinderance. And this counsel was taken, and the money was got together; and it was a great sum. And straightaway upon this a great many of the ships sailed abroad. Then the king held a moot, and there they looked through that great sum of money, and the brothers were paid for their loss out of it. Then the king talked with his men of what was to be done with this great sum. Then a man got up to speak, and said, "My lord, what think ye he deserves that gave the counsel?"Then they looked about to find the young man who had given the counsel in this matter, and there he was before the king. Then spake King Harold, "This money shall be dealt into two halves; my men shall have one half, and the other half I shall deal into two lots, and this young man shall have one lot, and I will look after the other. "Thrond thanked the king with fair words and blithe. And it was such a great sum of money that Thrond got that it was hard work to tell it out into marks. Then King Harold sailed away, and all the multitude of men that had been there also. Thrond fared to Norway with the merchants that had come thither with him, and they paid him the money he had asked for; and he bought him there a merchant ship both big and good, and loaded it with the great goods that he had gotten on that voyage. Then he held on his course in this ship to the Færeys, and came thither with all his goods safe and sound. And he took up his dwelling in Gate the spring after; and he felt no lack of chattels now. Thrond was a big man of growth, and red-haired he was, and red-bearded, freckled and grim of look, gloomy of mind, cunning and shrewd towards all men, bad to deal with, and ill-natured to most folk, yet fair of speech to greater men than himself; but in his heart he was ever false.

Chapter 4

Hafgrim was the name of a man that dwelt in Southrey in the Færeys; he was a mighty man and hard to deal with, and wealthy in goods. Guðrið was his wife’s name; she was Snæulf’s daughter. Hafgrim was chief over half the islands, and held his half on loan from King Harold Grayfell, who in those days ruled over Norway. Hafgrim was a very nimble-witted man, but was not counted a man of wisdom.

Einar was the name of his head houseman; he was nicknamed the Southrey-man. There was another man, called Eldearn Combhood, who also lived with Hafgrim. He was a man of many words, and evil of speech withal, dull and ill-willed, lazy and quarrelsome, and a liar and backbiter to boot. Two brothers are named in the story also, and they dwelt in Scufey, the one was named Breste and the other Beine; they were the sons of Sigmund. Now Sigmund, their father, and Thorbeorn Gatebeard, Thrond's father, were brothers. Breste and Beine were famous men; they were chiefs over half the islands, and held that in loan of Earl Hacon Sigurd's son, who in those days held, as it were, a kingdom in Throndham. Now these two men, Breste and his brother, were henchmen of Earl Hacon, and very dear friends of his. There was a coldness between them and Thrond, although their kinship was near. The two brothers had another homestead in Dimun, but it was a smaller place. Snæulf, Hafgrim's father-in-law, dwelt in Sandey; he was a Southrey man by blood; he had fled out of the Southreys for manslaughter and masterful deeds that he had done there, into the Færeys. He had been a sea-rover the greater part of his life, and he was even now a masterful man, and hard to stand against.

Chapter 5

Bearne was the name of a man that dwelt in Swiney; he was called Swiney-Bearne. He was a great franklin, and had a great estate; a very guileful man he was. He was Thrond of Gate's mother's brother. The Færey people's mootstead was in Streamsey, at a haven there called Thorshaven. Hafgrim dwelt in Southrey at a homestead that is called Temple; he was a great sacrificer, for in those days all the Færey people were heathens.

One day at harvest-tide, it happened at Hafgrim's homestead in Southrey, that Einar the Southrey-man and Eldearn Combhood were sitting together over a singeing fire, and they fell to matching men against the other. Einar took his two kinsmen Breste and Beine, and Eldearn took Hafgrim, and said that he was the better man. And at last it went so between them that Eldearn sprang up and struck at Einar with the stick he had in his hand, and it fell on Einar's shoulder and hurt him. And Einar caught up an axe and swung it onto Combhood's head, so that he fell down senseless, and spake never word more. And when Hafgrim came to know this, he drove Einar away, and bade him fare "to his kinsmen the men of Scufey, since he had thought most of them. ""And we must needs," says Hafgrim, "sooner or later come to grips with the men of Scufey. "So Einar went away, and came to the two brothers, and told them why he was come. They received him well, and he was with them through the winter, and well cared for. Then Einar begged Breste, his kinsman, to take up his case, and he did so. Now Breste was a wise man and well skilled in the law. That same winter Hafgrim fared in a ship to Scufey, and then he sought the two brethren, and asked them how they would answer for the harm that Einar had done to Eldearn Combhood. Breste answered that they would lay the suit to the best man's umpirage, so that it might be fairly settled. Hafgrim answered, "There shall be no settlement between us, unless I am left to fix the award myself. "But Breste answered him, "That is no fair settlement, and thou shalt not have it so. "Then Hafgrim summoned Einar to the Streameymoot; and so they parted withal. But Breste had made Combhood's assault on Einar known soon after it had happened. Now both parties came to the moot, and many with them. But when Hafgrim came into court on the one side, and laid the charge against Einar as the wrongdoer, the two brethren, Breste and Beine, came in on the other side with a great following; and Breste quashed the charge Hafgrim had made and unhallowed Combhood, by the old law of the land, for smiting a sackless man; and the judgment was given against Hafgrim, and they condemned Eldearn to outlawry and the full fine. Hafgrim said that he would have vengeance for this. Breste said that he would hold himself ready, and that he cared nothing for his threats; and with that they parted.

Chapter 6

A little while after this Hafgrim left home, and there went with him six men and Guðrið his wife. They took a boat and fared to Sandey, where his kinsmen Snæulf dwelt, the father of Guðrið his wife. When they reached the island, they could see no one out of doors on the farm, nor any one out on the island. Then they went up to the homestead and into the house, and there they found no one. Then they went into the hearth-room, and there was the board set out, and meat and drink on it, but there was no one to be found, and they wondered at that. They stayed there that night, but next morning they made them ready to leave, and rowed away along the island. Then from the other side of the island there rowed out to meet them a boat full of people, and they saw that it was yeoman Snæulf and all his household. So Hafgrim rowed towards them, and greeted Snæulf, his father-in-law, but he answered him not a word. Then Hafgrim asked him what counsel he would give him on his suit with Breste and his brother, so that he might win honour by it. Snæulf answered him: "It is ill-done of thee," says he, "to have meddled without a cause with better men than thyself; but ever the lowest lot fell to thee. ""Methinks I should get something better than blame from thee," says Hafgrim, "and I will not listen to thee. "Then Snæulf snatched up a spear and cast it at Hafgrim, but Hafgrim covered himself with his shield, and the spear stood fast in it, and he was not wounded. So they parted, and Hafgrim fared home to Southrey, and was ill-pleased with his luck.

Hafgrim and Guðrið his wife had a son whose name was Ossur. He was nine winters old, and a most promising lad when these things happened.

Now after some time had passed. Hafgrim fared from home to Eastrey to Thrond, and Thrond welcomed him kindly; and then Hafgrim sought counsel of Thrond as to what he would have him do in the matter of the suit with Breste and Beine, the men of Scufey. He said, moreover, that Thrond was the wisest man in the islands, and that he would gladly give him some fee for his counsel. Thrond said that he was seeking a strange boon of him in asking him to put himself at odds with his own kinsman. "And thou surely canst not be in earnest; yet I guess that it is so with thee, that thou wouldst fain have other men in the matter with thee, but art grudging to do what is in thy power to get thy business forwarded. ""It is not so," quoth Hafgrim, "and I will make thee a great offer now, if thou wilt be in counsel with me in this case, so that I may take those brethren’s lives. "Thrond answered him: "I will be with thee in thy doings against these brethren, but thou shalt promise to give me two cows’ worth every spring, and two hundreds worth in meat every fall, and this payment shall go on all thy life’s day, and it shall not cease at thy death. Moreover, I am not willing to stand with thee in this case without more men are bound up in it. And I will have thee seek to Bearne my mother’s brother in Swiney, and get him to be with thee in the case. "Hafgrim agreed to the bargain, and fared out thence to Swiney, and found Bearne, and besought him for his help in the matter, as Thrond had counselled him. Bearne answered him to the intent that he was not willing to go into the matter without he got some gain at his hands. Then Hafgrim bade him tell him his mind; and Bearne said, "Thou shalt give me three cows’ worth every spring, and every fall three hundreds’ worth in meat,"Hafgrim took this offer, and the matter being settled so, went home again.

Chapter 7

Now it must be told of the two brethren, Breste and Beine, that they had two homesteads, one in Scufey and the other in Dimun. Breste had a wife whose name was Cecilia. She was of Northern kin. They had a son whose name was Sigmund, and he was nine winters old when these things came to pass. He was both big and handsome. Beine had a leman whose name was Thora, and a son by her whose name was Thore, and he was eleven winters old at this time, and the hopefulest of lads.

Now it must be told that once on a time, while the two brothers Breste and Beine were dwelling at their homestead at Dimun, they were minded to fare out to little Dimun, whereon no man dwelt, and there they were wont to let their sheep feed, and the cattle they meant to kill. The two boys, Sigmund and Thore, begged to go with them, and the brethren suffered them to go, and they all went out to the island. The brethren had their weapons with them. Of Breste it is said that he was both big and strong, and a better swordsman than any other man, and a wise man withal, and beloved of all his friends. Beine, his brother, was a good man of his hands, and well skilled in feats, but he was not a match for his brother. Now soon they put out from the little Dimun, and as they steered their course for the greater Dimun, which men dwell in, they saw three boats with twelve men. They knew the men when they saw them. In one boat was Hafgrim of Southrey, Thrond of Gate was in another, and Bearne of Swiney in the third. They steered in between the brothers and the island, and cut them off from their landing-place; but the brethren brought up their boat at a place on the foreshore. There was a jutting rock above them, and they sprang up on it with their weapons in their hands, and set the two boys down beside them on the cliff. The cliff hung over both sides down to the sea, and here they stood, and it was a good place of vantage. Soon Hafgrim and they that were with him came up in their three boats and leapt out of the boats on to the foreshore where the cliff was; and Hafgrim and Swiney-Bearne made an onslaught upon the two brothers, but they defended themselves well and manfully. Thrond and his boat's crew reached the shore after the others, and they were not in that onset. Breste held the rock where it was easier to set on him and the worse to keep. Now they fought for a while, but could do little against the brethren. Then spake Hafgrim: "I thought thou, at least, Thrond, wouldst give me thy help, and that is why I gave thee my fee. "Thrond answered him, "Thou art the greatest of cowards surely, that canst not get the better of two men though thou hast two dozen with thee. But it is ever thy way to have others for targets before thee, and little thou carest to come near where any risk is. It were the best thing, if there be any heart in thee, for thee to set on Breste first, and let the others follow thee. Otherwise I see that thou canst do no good. "And he egged him on as hotly as he could. Then Hafgrim sprang up on the rock before Breste, and made at him with a spear, and drove it at his middle, and thrust him through. And when Breste felt that he had got his death-wound, he thrust himself forward on the spear towards Hafgrim, and hewed at him with his sword, and the stroke fell on Hafgrim's left shoulder, and clove down through shoulder and side, so that his arm fell down on the ground, and Hafgrim dropt down dead off the cliff, and Breste over him, and there they both lost their life. Then in the second place they set upon Beine, and he defended himself well; but the end was that he also lost his life there. Men say that Breste killed three men before he slew Hafgrim; Beine also slew two men there before he died. And when they were dead, Thrond bade slay the two boys, Sigmund and Thore. Bearne answered him, "They shall not be slain!""Yea," said Thrond, "nevertheless, if they are saved they will be the death of most of the men that are here today. "But Bearne said, "Ye shall slay me first!"Then said Thrond, "I never meant what I said; I only spake to try how thou wouldst take it; and now I will make it up to the boys for my being here today at this fight, and I offer to foster them. "The two boys were sitting on the cliff looking on while all these things happened, and Thore wept, but Sigmund said, "Do not let us weep, kinsman, but let us think on it the longer. "In the end they all went off, and Thrond took the boys home to Gate with him. Hafgrim's body was borne to Southrey, and there laid to earth after the old way; and the friends of Breste and Beine took their bodies home to Scufey, and buried them there after the old way. Now these things were spread abroad over all the Færeys, and every one mourned for the two brethren.

Chapter 8

That summer there came a ship from Norway to the Færeys, and the skipper's name was Raven. He was a Wick-man by kin, and owned a homestead at Tunsberg. He often sailed to Holmgard, and he was nicknamed Holmgard-farer. His ship came into Thorshavn, and when the chapmen were bound again for sailing, it must be told that one morning Thrond o'Gate put off in a skiff, and he came on

board and led Raven aside, and told him that he had two young thralls to sell him. Raven said he would not buy them before he saw them. Then Thrond led forward two boys with cropped heads in white cowls. They were handsome boys to look on, but their faces were swollen with rage. When Raven saw the boys, he asked Thrond, "These boys are the sons of Breste and Beine, whom you slew a short while ago; is it not so, Thrond?""I think it is so, indeed," said Thrond. "Then they shall never come into my power,"said Raven, "if I am to give money for them. ""Then let us come to an understanding," said Thrond, "Do thou take these two marks of silver, which I will give thee, if thou wilt take them on board with thee, so that they never come back again to the Færeys. "Then he poured the silver into the skipper’s lap, and told it out for him to see. And Raven saw that the silver was good, and in the end matters went so that he took the boys with him. As soon as he got a fair wind he put to sea, and made land off Norway, as he wished, east of Tunsberg, and there he stayed through the winter, and the boys with him, and they were well cared for.

Chapter 9

In the spring he got his ship ready for the eastward voyage and asked the boys how they thought they had come off. "Well," Sigmund answered, "if we think on the time when we were in Thrond’s power. "Then asked Raven, "Do you know the bargain that was made between us two, Thrond and me?""We are well aware of that," said Sigmund. "I guess," said Raven, "the best thing will be for you two to go where you like for me. And as for the silver that Thrond gave into my hand along with you, I guess the best thing will be for you to have it for your keep, and ye are far too helpless withal in an unknown land. "Sigmund thanked him, and said that he had treated them like a man as long as they had known him.

Now of Thrond it must be told that he took under him the whole lordship of the Færeys, and all the goods and holdings that those brethren, Breste and Beine, his kinsmen, had owned. And he took the boy Ossur Hafgrim’s son home to himself into fosterage. Ossur was then ten winters old. And now Thrond ruled alone over all the Færeys, and no man dared gainsay him.

Chapter 10

The summer the two brothers, Breste and Beine, were slain, there was a change of kings in Norway. Harold Grayfell was slain off the land and Earl Hacon came in his stead, and at first he was tributary Earl to King Harold Gormsson, and held the realm of him. And with this the rule of the sons of Gundhild was clean ended; some were slain and some were driven out of the land.

Now of Sigmund and Thore it must be told that they stayed two winters in the Wick after Raven let them go free, and by that time all the money that Raven had given them was spent. Sigmund was then twelve winters old and Thore fourteen. They heard of Earl Hacon’s getting the kingdom, and it seemed to them the best thing to go and see him if they could win thither, for they thought they would most likely get some good by it, inasmuch as their fathers had served him. So they went out of the Wick into Upland, and then away east over Heath-mark, and north on to the Dover-fells; and by the time they got there it was winter, and they met with snowstorms and bad weather. Then they went up on the fells with little counsel, and fared wild and badly, and lay out many days without food. At last Thore lay down, and begged Sigmund to save his own life and seek down off the fell. Sigmund told him they would get down both together or neither of them. And so unlike were they in strength, that Sigmund took up Thore on his back and walked on farther still. And now they were both sore weary. But one evening they came to a little dale off the fell, and they went down it, and at last they smelt a smell of smoke, and close by they found a house. They went in, and found a room wherein two women were sitting; one was of middle age, but the other was a young girl; both were fair of face. They received the

boys kindly, and took off their clothes and brought them dry clothes instead, and quickly gave them food to eat, and afterwards sent them to sleep, treating them kindly, and telling them that they must not be in the way when the goodman came home, "for," said they, "he is quick of temper. "But Sigmund woke as a man came in; great of growth he was, and clad in a reindeer hide, and he was carrying a reindeer on his back. He drew his nostrils up and frowned, and asked what was come thither. The goodwife said that there were two boys come, "little boys, cold, and almost tired to death. "He answered her, "Thou art taking the best way to let folks know where we are by taking folk into our house, and so I have often told thee. ""I could not bear," said the goodwife, "that two such pretty boys should die here beside our house. "The yeoman let the matter pass, and they went to meat and afterward to sleep. There were two beds in the sleeping-room---the yeoman and the goodwife lay in one, and the yeoman’s daughter in the other. But they made a place for the boys somewhere in the house. In the morning the yeoman was early afoot and he spoke to the two boys: "Since the women wish it, I am content for you to stay here today, if it please you. "They said they would gladly stay.

Chapter 11

All that day the yeoman was abroad, and at even he came home and was very merry with Sigmund and Thore. And next morning he came to the boys and spake: "It was fate that you should take your way to my house, and now I think it best for you to dwell here all the winter, if it seems best to you. The women feel kindly toward you, and you have travelled out of your way, and it is far hence every way to any dwelling. "Sigmund and Thore thanked the yeoman for his offer, and said that they would gladly stay there. The yeoman said that they must pay good heed to the goodwife and her daughter, and lay hands to anything they wanted done. "But," said he, "I must abroad every day to get food for us, if it may hap. "

So the two boys stayed there, and they were well cared for, and the two women were kind to them, and they deemed themselves in luck. But ever the yeoman would be abroad all day. The house was good and strong and well kept. The yeoman named Wolf, his wife Ragnhild, and their daughter Thurið. She was the fairest of women to look on and high of heart. There was good love between Sigmund and Thurið, and they would be often talking together, but the goodman and goodwife said nothing to this. And now the winter passed by, and the first day of summertide was come. Then Wolf the yeoman fell into talk with Sigmund, and spake: "It has so happened that ye two have stayed here the winter with me; now, if nothing please you better than to stay here, ye shall stay here, and grow up to manhood here. And indeed it may be that our lots are cast together for the time to come also. But there is one thing I will warn you against; go not into the wood that lies north of the homestead. "They agreed to this, and thanked yeoman Wolf for his offer and accepted it gladly.

Chapter 12

There was a tarn that lay hard by the homestead, and thither the yeoman used to go and teach them swimming: then they would fall to butt-shooting, and were trained in shooting. And Sigmund soon became skilled in all the feats that Wolf could do, so that he became a very skillful man in all feats. Thore became skilful also, though he never got to be Sigmund’s match. Wolf was a big man and strong, and the brothers could see that he was a very skilful man at all feats. They had now been there three winters, and Sigmund was fifteen and Thore seventeen winters old. Sigmund was now a man full grown of body, and Thore also, but Sigmund was ever the foremost in all things, although he was the younger by two winters.

Now it came to pass one day in the summer that Sigmund fell to talking with Thore. "What would happen," said he, "though we were to go into the woods that lies north of the homestead?"Thore answered, "I have no mind to try. ""It is not so with me," says Sigmund, "and thither I am minded to go. ""Thou must needs have thy way," said Thore, "but we are breaking the bidding of our foster-father. "So they went on their way. Now Sigmund had a wood-axe in his hand. They got into the wood and came to a fair ride, and when they had been there but a short while, they heard a great breaking in the wood, and soon they saw a bear, mighty great and grim to look on; a great wood-bear it was, wolf-grey of hue. They sprang back at once into the path by which they had come thither, but the path was small and narrow, so that Thore ran first, and Sigmund behind him. The beast ran after them down the path, and the path was all too narrow for it, and it broke the oaks before it. Now Sigmund turned swiftly aside out of the path into the midst of the trees, and waited there till the beast came up even with him. Then he hewed at the beast right between the ears with both his hands, so that the axe stuck into its head, and the beast fell forward and died there without any struggle. And when Thore was aware of it he spake out, "This valiant deed was to be thy lot, kinsman, not mine, and it seems most like to me that I shall be thy after-boat in many things. "Then said Sigmund, "Let us try and get the beast raised up. "And they did so, and got it upright, and bound it to a tree, so that it could not fall, and stuck a peg in its mouth, so that the beast should seem to be gaping with its mouth. Then they went home. And when they got home, there was Wolf, their foster-father, at the house in the garth before it, and was going off to seek them. He frowned on them, and asked them where they had been. Sigmund answered, "Ill has happened, foster-father mine; we have broken thy bidding, and the bear has chased us. "Wolf answered him, "This was to be looked for, that things would turn out so; yet I wish the beast had not followed you, for this beast is of such a kind that I have no great wish to meddle with it; however we will try it now," said he. Then Wolf turned into the house, and took a spear into his hand, and then ran into the wood, and Sigmund and Thore with him; and now he catches sight of the bear, and runs up to it and drives his spear at it, and with that the bear falls down. And Wolf saw that the bear was dead before, and said, "Do you mock me?Which of you has slain the beast?"Thore answered him, "I cannot take it on myself, foster-father," said he; "Sigmund slew the bear. ""It is the greatest of valiant deeds," said Wolf, "and many another valiant deed shall surely follow this first deed of thine, Sigmund. "After this they went home, and Wolf had even a greater liking for Sigmund than he had before.

Chapter 13

The two kinsmen stayed with Wolf till Sigmund was eighteen and Thore twenty winters old. Sigmund at that time was a wonderful man for bigness and might, and all feats of skill and strength, so that the quickest way to tell of him is to say that he came nearest of any man to Olave Tryggwesson in all feats of strength and skill.

And now it came to pass on a day that Sigmund told his foster-father Wolf that he would fain go abroad, "for methinks," said he, "life will yield but a mean outcome for us two if we do not seek to know other men. ""It shall be even as thou wilt," says Wolf. Now, they had found that every harvest and every spring they had been there Wolf would be abroad for seven nights or thereabout, and then bring home much stores and linen and clothes, or such other things as they needs must have. So Wolf had clothes made for them, and fitted them out well for their departure. It could be seen that the two women took the parting near to heart, and chiefly the younger one. And now they took leave of them and fared forth, and Wolf went on the way with them, and was with them over the Doverfell, till they could see north over Orcdale. Then Wolf sat down, and told them that he would rest awhile. So they all sat down. Then spake Wolf, "I have a mind to know now whom I have fostered, and of what kin ye be, and what is your land of birth. "Then they told him all their life that was past, and Wolf was very sorry for them. Then spake Sigmund, "Now I would have thee, foster-father," said he, "tell us thy life,

and what has happened in it. ""So it shall be, then," said Wolf.

Chapter 14

Then I betake me to my story. There was once a franklin whose name was Thoralf, dwelling in Heathmark in the Uplands. He was a mighty man, and reeve to the Upland kings. He was a married man, and his wife's name was Idun, and the name of his daughter Ragnhild, and she was well-nigh the fairest of all women to look on. Not far off there dwelt a yeoman whose name was Stangrim, a good yeoman and a wealthy. Thora was the name of his wife. They had a son whose name was Thorkell. He was a likely man, big and strong. And this was Thorkell's work while he was at home with his father: every fall, when the frost took and the ice lay on the water, he would lie out in the wilds, and certain fellows of his with him, hunting the wild beasts and he was the best of bowmen. This was his work when the dry frost took, and therefore he was nicknamed Thorkell Dry-frost. Now on a day Thorkell fell to talk with his father, and told him that he wished he would get him a match, and ask for Ragnhild, daughter of franklin Thoralf in marriage for him. His father told him that he was leaping high. But matters went so that father and son fared over to franklin Thoralf, and did their errand of asking his daughter Ragnhild of him in marriage for Thorkell. Thoralf was slow in answering them, and said that he had looked higher for her than Thorkell, but that he would give them a good answer for the sake of the friendship that was between him and Stangrim; nevertheless that this could not be: and with that they left and fared home.

Chapter 15

A little after this Thorkell went from home with another man one night, when he heard that Thoralf was away from home on his work as reeve, and went in with his mates by night where Ragnhild was sleeping, caught her up in his arms, and bore her out, and carried her home with him. His father was ill pleased at it, and told him he had got hold of a stone that was too heavy for him, and bade him take her back again quickly. But he answered, "I will not do that. "Then Stangrim his father bade him go away. And Thorkell did so, and went off with Ragnhild and lay out in the wood, and there were with them on their path twelve men, fellows and mates of Thorkell. When franklin Thoralf came home and was aware of these tidings, he gathered men to him till they were an hundred together, and went up to yeoman Stangrim's, and bade him yield up his son and give back his daughter into his hands. Stangrim told him they were not there. And Thoralf and his men ransacked the homestead, but found not that they sought. After this they went up into the wood, and sought them there, and they dealt out the search between them, and there were over thirty men with Thoralf. Now it came to pass one day that Thoralf saw twelve men in the wood together, and a woman with them the thirteenth, and it seemed to him that he knew them, and he made towards them. But Thorkell told his fellows that there were men coming towards them; and they asked Thorkell what counsel or plan he would have them take. "There is a hillock hard by here," said he, "let us, therefore, all fare thither, for it is a good coign of vantage. We will get up stones ready on it, and defend ourselves as manfully as we can. "So they all fared to the hillock, and made them ready there. Thoralf and his men quickly came up with them, and made at them with their weapons, but Thorkell and his men defended themselves well and manfully, and their meeting ended in this wise, that there fell twelve of Thoralf's men and six of Thorkell's, but the other five of those that were with him were wounded. Franklin Thoralf was hurt to the death. Then Thorkell fled into the woods, and his five fellows with him, and in this wise they parted. But Ragnhild stayed behind, and she was taken to the homestead with her father. But when Thoralf was come to his homestead, he died there of the wound that he had got, and it was said that Thorkell was his slayer, and these things were spread abroad. Thorkell went home to his father. He was but lightly hurt, but most of his fellows were badly wounded, yet they were all healed there.

Chapter 16

Now after these things the Upland folk called a moot, and at that moot Thorkell Dry-frost was made an outlaw; and when father and son heard of it, Stangrim told Thorkell that he must not bide at home while they were seeking most hotly after him. "But thou shalt go, kinsman," says he, "to the river that falls hard by the homestead, for there are great cliffs along the river, and in those river-cliffs caves, and no man knows of that hidingplace but myself only. Thither shalt thou go, and take food with thee. "And so did Thorkell, and he was in the caves while the search was hottest after him, but they found him not. But it seemed to him very dismal there, so that after some time he went abroad out of the caves, and up to the homestead that Yeoman Thoralf had owned, and carried off Ragnhild for the second time, and set forth for the fells and the wastes. "And here I took up my dwelling," said he, "and here I have been ever since with Ragnhild my wife, eighteen winters, and that is the age of my daughter Thurið. And now I have told you the story of my life. ""This story of thine is, to my mind, no light one, foster-father,"said Sigmund, "and now I must tell thee that I have ill repaid thee thy kindness and fostering, for thy daughter told me when we two parted that she was with child, and there is no other man in the case save myself, wherefore also I was the more willing to leave you, for I feared lest this matter should part us. ""Long have I known that there were thoughts of love between you and her," answered Thorkell, "and I would not forbid it. "Then said Sigmund, "I will beg this boon of thee, foster-father mine, that thou give thy daughter Thurið to no man else, for I mean to have her to wife, and no other will I wed. "Thorkell answered him, "My daughter could not wed a better man, but I will ask this of thee, Sigmund, if thou find favour with any prince, that thou remember my name, and bring me into the law again and to a settlement with my countrymen, for I am become very weary of this desert. "Sigmund told him that he surely would do so if he were able to bring it about.

With that they parted. And the kinsmen fared on till they came to Earl Hacon at Lathe, for there he had his seat as Earl. Then they went up before the Earl and greeted him, and he took it well, and asked them who they were. Sigmund told him he was the son of Breste, "he that was thy reeve whilom in the Færeys, and was slain there. Therefore, lord, have I sought to find thee, for I hoped for thy good favour, and I would fain be bound in service to thee, lord, and my kinsman with me. "Earl Hacon said that he wist not rightly who they were, "yet thou art not unlike Breste, but thou must prove thy kinship thyself. In the meantime I will not grudge thee thy meat at my board. "And he showed them a seat beside his Guests. Now Sweyn, Hacon’s son, was then a young man, and he was with his father’s following in those days.

Chapter 17

Now Sigmund came to talk with Sweyn, the Earl’s son; many feats of skill also he did before him, and the Earl’s son took great pleasure in his company. And Sigmund brought his case before Sweyn, and begged him to lend him his help that he might find favour in his father’s eyes. Sweyn asked him what he sought at his father’s hands. "I would fain go a warring," said Sigmund, "if thy father would help me. "

"That was well thought of," says Sweyn.

So the winter passed on till Yule, and at Yuletide Earl Eric, Hacon’s son, came there east from the Wick, for there his Earl’s seat was, and Sigmund fell into talk with Earl Eric, and set forth his desire to him. Eric promised him his goodwill with his father Hacon, and said that he would give him no less help than Earl Hacon did. And after Yule Sigmund brought the matter up before Earl Hacon, and begged him to give him some help, and favour his prayer for the sake of Breste his father, who was sometime his liegeman. Then answered Earl Hacon, "Surely, I took the loss of a good follower when

Breste my henchman was slain, that was a right brave man, and right worthy of ill at my hands are they that slew him; but to what end dost thou speak now?"Sigmund said that he was most fain to go on a Wiking-cruise, and get thereby some good report before men, or else death. The Earl said that he had spoken well, "and thou shalt know in the spring, when men get ready for seafaring, what I think of thy words. "

And when the winter was gone Sigmund begged Earl Hacon to make good his friendly words. And the Earl answered him, "I will give thee a long-ship, and on board of her forty weaponed men. But the crew will not be picked men, because few men will be willing to follow thee, an outland man and unknown. "Sigmund thanked the Earl, and told Eric what help his father had given him. "That was not a great venture," said Eric, "yet it may bring thee gain, and I will give another ship and forty men aboard of her. "Now the ship that Eric gave him was well found in every way. Then he told Sweyn what help his kinsfolk had given him. Sweyn made answer: "Things go so with me now that it is not as easy for me as for my kinsmen to venture much on my friends; nevertheless, I will give thee a third ship and forty men aboard of her, my own liegemen they shall be, and I think they will follow thee best of all the men that have been given thee for thy crews. "

Chapter 18

Then Sigmund got him ready for his cruise, and his men with him, and set sail when he was bound, east to the Wick, and thence to Denmark and through Eyre Sound and right into the East Sea. And there he cruised all the summer and gat little booty, for he dared not, with the small strength he had, hold on his course where there might be much odds against him. Moreover, he let merchants go their way in peace.

As the summer passed on, he sailed eastward till he came under Elf Scaur, where is ever a great lair of Wickings. And when they had laid their ships in a berth under an island, Sigmund went upon the cliff to look around. He saw five ships lying under the island on the other side, and the fifth was a dragon-ship. With that he went down to his men and told them that five Wicking-ships were lying under the cliff on the other side. "And now I will tell you this," says he, "that I am no whit minded to fly from meeting them without trying their might; for we shall never win any renown unless we put our plans to the stake. "They bade him look to it. "Then let us now get up stones aboard the ships,"says Sigmund, "and make us ready in the best way we may. We will lay our ships on the outer side of the bay to which we are now come, for it is smallest there, and it seemed to me on the evening when we sailed in, that no ship could take up a berth inside near us, if we were to lay our three ships forward there side by side, for it may be good to us that they cannot lay at us on all sides. "And this they do. On the morning, when they had laid their ships in the outermost part of the bay, there rowed in towards them the five Wicking-ships, and on the poop of the dragon-ship there stood a big strong-looking man, who called out to them, and asked who was the master of their ships. Sigmund gave him his name and asked for his. He said that he was called Randwer, and that he came of kindred east in Holmgard, and he told them they had now two ways to choose between, either to give up their ships and themselves into his hands, or to defend themselves. Sigmund said that was no fair choice, and they must needs first try their weapons. Randwer bade his men lay him alongside of the three ships, since they could not all come at them, and he would fain see first how things would go. Sigmund steered the ship that Sweyn Earlsson had given him, and Thore the one that Earl Eric had owned. Then they lay aboard of one another, and the fight began. And Sigmund and his men let fly with the stones so fast that Randwer’s folk could do nothing but cover themselves, and when the stones were gone they kept up a shower of arrows hard and fast; and therewith a great many of the Wickings fell, and many were wounded. Then Sigmund and his men betook them to their cutting weapons. And the fight began to turn against Randwer’s crew; and when he saw how ill it sped with his men, he told them they must be

very worthless fellows not to get the better of men who, he said, were not men at all. They told him he egged them on enough but covered himself, and bade him venture forth himself. He said he would do so. Then he laid the dragon aboard, and another ship, on which were men that had rested awhile, and the third ship he manned with unwounded men. And now they lay aboard of one another for the second time, and the fight began. And this was a much more stubborn onset than before. Sigmund was foremost of all men aboard his ship, and he hewed both hard and fast, and Thore, his kinsman, went well forward. They fought long so evenly that no man could tell which side would have the best of it. At last Sigmund said to his men: "We shall never beat them thoroughly without we venture ourselves farther forward. I shall try to board the dragon. Do you follow me like men. "Then Sigmund boarded the dragon, and eleven men with him, and there he slew man after man as quick as could be, and the men that were with him followed him up well. Thore also boarded the dragon, and four men with him, and all gave way before them.

Now, when Randwer saw that, he ran out against Sigmund, and they met and fought a good while. Then Sigmund showed his skill of fence, for he cast his sword up, flinging it into the air, and caught it again in his left hand and caught his shield in his right, and then hewed at Randwer with his sword, and took off his right leg below the knee. With that Randwer fell down. Sigmund gave him another blow on the neck that took off his head. Then Sigmund's men shouted the war-shout, and at that the Wickings fled in the three other ships, but Sigmund and they that were with him chased the dragon in such fashion that they slew every man born of woman that was on board. Then they told over their crew, and there were fallen of Sigmund's crew thirty men. After that they lay their ship in its berth, and bound up their wounds and rested there for two or three nights. Sigmund took the dragon for his own and the other ship that was with it. They took there great wealth both in weapons and other goodly gear. After that they sailed away for Denmark and so north to the Wick, and there they found Earl Eric; he greeted Sigmund kindly, and bid him stay with him. Sigmund thanked the Earl for his offer, but said that he must first go north to Earl Hacon. He left two of his ships there behind him in the Earl's keeping, as he was light-handed. When they got to Earl Hacon, he greeted Sigmund and his fellows kindly. And Sigmund stayed with the Earl through the winter and he became a very able man.

And at Yule-tide that winter Sigmund became one of Earl Hacon's house-carles and Thore with him, and there for a while they sat in peace with good welcome.

Chapter 19

There ruled over Sweden at that time King Eric the Victorious, the son of Beorn, the son of Eric, the son of Eywind. He was a mighty king. One winter twelve Northern merchants had fared eastward over the Keel into Sweden, and when they came into Sweverick, they held a fair among the folk of the land, and at the fair men fell out and a Northerner slew a Swede. When the king was ware of it, he sent his Guests thither and let slay those twelve men. Now when the spring was come, Earl Hacon asked Sigmund where he was thinking of holding his course that summer. Sigmund said that it should lay with the Earl to fix that. Earl Hacon spake thus: "I wish this, that thou shouldst fare somewhat nearer to the Swede king's realm, and bear this in thy mind of the Swedes, that they slew twelve of my men in the winter not long ago, and there hath been no vengeance yet got for this. "Sigmund said it should be done if he could bring it about. Earl Hacon then gave Sigmund a picked band of his own house-carles and of the fyrd, and all were now ready enough to follow Sigmund. Then he held on his course to the Wick, and found Earl Eric, and he gave Sigmund a fine band of men, and now Sigmund had full three hundred men and five ships well found. They sailed thence southward to Denmark, and so eastward off Sweden, till they laid their ships off Sweden east of the land. Then said Sigmund to his men: "We must make a landing here, and let us go up like men of war. "Then they landed and went up three hundred men together and came to a land where men dwelt; and there they slew men and took

gear, and burnt homesteads. And the country folk fled far away into the waste and the wood as far as they could go. Not far thence from where they followed those that fled there ruled a reeve of King Eric whose name was Beorn. He gathered the armed men to him when he heard of their harrying, and they came together a great host and got between Sigmund's men and their ships. And one day they were ware of this land-host, and they told Sigmund of it, and asked him what counsel they should take. "There are many counsels still, and good ones withal,"said he; "often times they have not gotten the victory who were the most men, if only the others have gone briskly to meet them. Now we will take this plan, we will draw up our array and make a battle-wedge. I and my kinsman Thore will be the foremost men, then shall come three and then five, and so on, but the shielded men shall be outside on the shoulders of the host on either side. And this is the counsel I would have us take, to run right upon their array and try if we can get right through them in this way; and I think the Swedes will not stand fast in the field. "And they did so. They ran at the Swedish array and went right through them, and there began a great fight, and many of the Swedes fell. And Sigmund went well forward and hewed away on either hand; and he got up to Beorn's banner-bearer and dealt him his deathblow. Then he egged on his men to break the shield wall that was shut round Beorn, and they did so. Sigmund got up to Beorn and they came to blows. But Sigmund soon got the better of him, and gave him his death-wound. Then the Wickings set up the whoop of victory and the country-folk's host fled. Sigmund told his men not to follow those that fled, for that they had not might enough for this in an unknown land, and they hearkened to him. They got much wealth there and fared with it to their ships; then they sailed away from Sweden and held eastward to Holmgard, and harried there round the islands and nesses.

There are two brothers spoken of that were of the Swede king's realm, the name of the one was Wandil, and of the other Aðil. They were landwardens of the Swede king's, and had never less than eight ships and two dragon-ships with them. Now the Swede king heard these tidings, that there had been a raid made in his land, and he sent word to these brethren and bade them take the life of Sigmund and his fellows. They told him they would do so. And about harvest-tide Sigmund and his men were sailing east, and came under an island that lies off Sweden. Then spake Sigmund to his men: "We have not got among friends here, for they are Swedes that dwell here; let us therefore beware of them. So now I will go upon the island here, and look about me. "And he did so, and saw where ten ships lay on the other side of the island; two dragon-ships there were, and eight other ships.

Then Sigmund told his men to make them ready, and get all their goods out of the ships and get stones on board instead. And they made them ready so in the night-time.

Chapter 20

And early in the morning they rowed toward the ten ships, whereupon the masters called out to them to tell who was their leader. Sigmund told them his name, and when they knew what men they were, there was no need of seeking any further cause, but they got up their weapons and began the fight at once. And Sigmund and his men had never been put anywhere to such a proof as they were now. Wandil laid his dragon alongside of Sigmund's, and they withstood him stoutly. And when they had fought for awhile, Sigmund said to his men: "Right as before we shall not get the better of them unless go nearer. I shall leap on board of the dragon here, do you follow me well. "With that, Sigmund leapt on board the dragon, and there followed him a great band, and there he slew one man after another as soon as he was on board, till the crew gave way before them. Then Wandil sought to meet Sigmund, and they came to blows and fought for a long time. Sigmund tried the same sleight as before, he shifted his weapons in his hands, and hewed at Wandil with his left hand, and smote off his right hand, and down fell the sword he had fought with. Sigmund made short work with him then and slew him. Then his men set up the whoop of victory. Then said Aðil, "Things have turned; Wandil must be slain.

We must betake us to flight. Let every man look out for himself!"So Aðil fled, and they that were with him, with five ships, but four were left behind, and the dragon the fifth. And they slew every man born of woman that was on board of those five. And Sigmund took the dragon with him and the other ships also.

Afterwards they sailed away till they came to the Dane king’s realm, where they thought themselves safe and sheltered. Then they rested awhile and bound up their wounds. And when they were in good case again they sailed till they came to the Wick, and found Earl Eric, and there they were welcomed. They stayed there but a little while, and then fared north to Throndheim, where they found Earl Hacon. He welcomed Sigmund and his men, and thanked them for this work they had wrought in the summer. The kinsmen, Sigmund and Thore, stayed with the Earl through the winter, and a good many of their men with them, but their crew was lodged in other places. They lacked nought for chattels.

Chapter 21

When the spring came, Earl Hacon asked Sigmund where he was minded to harry that summer. Sigmund said that should lay with the Earl. "I will not set thee on to put the Swedes to shame" said the Earl, "but I would fain have thee fare west over the deep near the Orkneys. There is a man wont to dwell called Harold Ironpate; he is an outlaw of mine, and one of my greatest foes. He was done many a lawless deed here in Norway. He is a mighty man; him I would have thee kill, if thou can bring it about. "Sigmund said that he would meet him if he could get at him.

Sigmund sailed from Norway with eight ships. Thore steered the dragon Wandilsloom and Sigmund Randwersloom. They sailed westward over the Main, and got no good all the summer. And at the end of the summer they ran under Angelsay with their ships, which island lies in the English Sea. There they saw lying before them ten ships, and with them was a great dragonship. Sigmund right soon saw that Harold Ironpate led those ships. They settled the next morning for the fight. And the night passed, and at sunrise in the morning they handed up their weapons, and all that day they fought till night, when the darkness parted them, and they settled to fight next morning. And when the morning came Harold hailed Sigmund’s ship, and asked him whether he would fight again. He said, he had a mind to do nothing else. "Then I will say now," says Harald, "what I have never said before, that I would we two should become mates and fight no longer. "The men on both sides spoke up for this, and said that they must need be set at one and make one fleet, and that there were few that could withstand them then. Sigmund said that one thing stood in the way against their being set at one. "What is that?" says Harold. Sigmund answers, "Earl Hacon sent me after thy head. ""Ill is my wont at his hands," says Harold, "and ye two are right unlike, for thou art the bravest of men, but Hacon is one of the worst of men. ""We two shall not think the same way about that," says Sigmund. But now their men bestirred them to get them set at one, and it came about that they were set at one, and they lay all their war-booty together in one lot. That summer they harried far and wide, and few could withstand them. But when harvest-tide was come, Sigmund said that he should steer from Norway. "Then we two must part," answers Harold. "That shall not be,"said Sigmund. "I would have us both fare to Norway, for then I shall have done something of what I gave my word on to Earl Hacon if I could find thee. ""Why should I go to meet my greatest foe?"

"Let me be counsellor in this matter," said Sigmund. "Well," said Harold, "inasmuch as I trust thee well, and also in that thou art well used to such things, therefore thou shalt be my counsellor here. "

Whereon they steered north for Norway, and made it off Hordaland, where they were told that Earl Hacon was in North Mæri at Bergund. They held on their way thither, and laid their ships in Stone-voe. Then Sigmund went ashore at Bergund with twelve men in a row-boat, for he would be the first to go to Earl Hacon, but Harold lay in Stone-voe the while. And he went up to see Earl Hacon

when he was sitting at the board drinking, and he came into the hall before the Earl and greeted him well. The Earl welcomed him blithely, and asked him for tidings, and bade them set a stool for him, and they did so. They talked for a while and Sigmund told him of his cruise, but he did not let out that he had found Ironpate. But the story seemed to Hacon to hang overlong, till at last he asked whether he had found Harold. "Yea, of a truth," said Sigmund. And he told him how it had come about, that they two were set at one. When the Earl heard it he spake not a word, but grew red to look on, and after a while he said, "Thou hast often done my errands better than this, Sigmund. ""The man is here now, lord," said Sigmund, "in thy power, and I would have thee take his offers for my sake and give him quarter or grith for life and limb, and for his abiding here. "

"There shall not go that way," said the Earl, "but I shall have him slain as soon as I can get at him. ""I will offer thee my handsel for him, Lord," said Sigmund, "and as great fee as ever thou wilt withal. "

"He shall never get peace from me," said the Earl. Then answered Sigmund, "I have served thee for little and for no good, inasmuch as I cannot even get grith and peace for one man; I shall fare abroad out of this land and serve thee no longer, and I only wish that it may cost you something at his hands before he is slain. "With that Sigmund sprung up and walked out of the room, but the Earl sat still and held his peace, and no man dared pray for Sigmund. Then the Earl began to speak, "Wroth was Sigmund then," said he, "and scathe will there be to my kingdom if he goes abroad; but that cannot have been said in earnest. ""It surely was said in earnest," say his men. "Go now after him," then says the Earl, "and we will make peace withal as he begged; "with that the Earl’s men went to Sigmund and told him this, whereon Sigmund goes to the Earl, and the Earl was foremost to greet him telling him that he would make peace as he had begged him at first, "for I will not have thee go abroad away from me. "Then Sigmund took grith and peace for Harold from Earl Hacon, and he went to find Harold, and told him what had happened and how the matter was settled.

Harold said it was little good to trust the Earl; however, they went together to meet him, and he and the Earl were set at one together. After this Harold went off north to Halgoland, but Sigmund was with the Earl all the winter in great favour, and his kinsman there also, and a great following with them. Sigmund kept his men well both in clothes and weapons.

Chapter 22

Now of the men of the Færeys it must be told that Ossur Hafgrimson grew up with Thrond of Gate till he was now a fullgrown man; he was a frank-looking man and a manly. Thrond gat him a match in the island, the daughter of one of the best franklins; moreover he told him that they should share the power and rule of the island into two halves, and that he should have the half his father had had, and Thrond the half which the brothers Breste and Beine had had.

Thrond also told Ossur that he thought it most meet that he should take all the fee, both lands and chattels, which those brothers had owned, and hold it as weregeld for his father. And all was done as Thrond had counselled. Ossur now had two or rather three homesteads, one at the Temple on his father’s heritage in Southrey, another in Scufey, the third at Dimun on the heritage of Sigmund and Thore. The Færey folk had heard tell of Sigmund that he has become a famous man, and made great readiness against him. Ossur had an earthwork cast up round the homestead in Scufey, and was there the most of his time. Scufey is shapen so from its height that there is the best vantage ground there. There is but one path up it, and men say that the island cannot be got at though there came twenty men against it, yea, thirty even, for that same there never so many they could not win it if they had not that path free. Ossur went about his homestead with twenty men, but there were over thirty men, counting workmen, up at the houses. No man in the Færeys was as mighty as he was save Thrond. The great silver that Thrond gat at Haleyre never came to an end, and he was the wealthiest man in the islands,

and he ruled all things in the Færeys at this time, although he and Ossur were not at all alike.

Chapter 23

Of Sigmund it must now be told that he fell to talk with Earl Hacon, and told him that he was minded to leave warring and hie out to the Færeys; for he said he would not hear it said any longer that he had not avenged his father and be upbraided therefor. And he begged the Earl to help him to this end and give him his counsel how he might bring it about. Hacon answered and said that the deep was hard to fare over to the islands, and that the surf ran high, "and no long-ship can hold thither, but I will let make two round-ships for thee and give thee men to go with thee, so that ye may be well found to both our minds. "Sigmund thanked him for his good deed, and through the winter they got ready for the cruise, and in the spring the ships were finished and the men found. Harold came to meet him in the spring and settled to fare with him.

And when he was fully bound, Earl Hacon said to him, "One should speed him well one would fain welcome back. "And he went out of doors with Sigmund. Then spake Hacon, "What sayest thou to this?In what dost thou put thy trust?""I put my trust in my own might and main," said Sigmund. "That must not be,"the Earl answered, "but thou shalt put thy trust where I have put all my trust, namely, in Thorgerd Shinebride," said he. "And we will go and see her now and seek luck for thee at her hands. "Sigmund bade him settle this matter as he would. They set forth along a certain path to the wood, and thence by a little bypath into the wood, till they came where a ride lay before them, and a house standing in it with a stake fence round it. Right fair was that house, and gold and silver was run into the carvings thereof. They went into the house, Hacon and Sigmund together, and a few men with them. Therein were a great many gods. There were many glass roof-lights in the house, so that there was no shadow anywhere. There was a woman in the house over against the door, right fairly decked she was. The Earl cast him down at her feet, and there he lay long, and when he rose up he told Sigmund that they should bring her some offering and lay the silver thereof on the stool before her. "And we shall have it as a mark of what she tinks of this, if she will do as I wish and let the ring loose which she holds in her hand. For thou, Sigmund, shalt get luck by that ring. "Then the Earl took hold of the ring, and it seemed to Sigmund that she clasped her hand on it, and the Earl got not the ring. The Earl cast him down a second time before her, and Sigmund saw that the Earl was weeping. Then he stood up again and caught hold of the ring, and now, behold, it was loose; and he took it and gave it to Sigmund gave him his word on it. With that they parted.

And Sigmund went to his ships; and it is said that there were fifty men on board each of them. Then they put to sea and gat a fair wind till they saw the fowl off the islands, and the ships kept together. Harold Ironpate was on board Sigmund’s ship, and Thore steered the other ship. But now a storm drove against them and swept the two ships apart, and they drifted a great way, so that many days passed.

Chapter 24

Of Sigmund and they with him it must now be told that at last they gat a fair wind, and made sail for the islands; but they found that they had made the east of the islands, for there were men on board with Sigmund that knew the lay of the land, and were almost got to Eastrey. Sigmund said that he would of all things choose to get Thrond into his hands. But as they bore up for the island, both wind and storm got up against them, so that it was not at all likely that they could make the island; nevertheless, they brought up at Swiney, for the men were keen and handy. They got there as the night was dying, and forty men went straightway up to the homestead, and ten took care of the ship. They went to the homestead and broke in, and took franklin Bearne in his bed and led him out. Bearne asked who were

the leaders of this raid. Sigmund said he was. "Then thou shalt needs be grim with them who showed thee nought but ill at the fight when thy father was slain. And I will not deny that I was there. But dost thou remember at all what side I took in thy case when it was counselled that thou shouldst be slain, and thy kinsman, Thore, with thee, and I spoke and said they should slay me first?""Surely, I mind me of that," said Sigmund. "When shall I be repaid?" said Bearne. "Now," said Sigmund, "thou shalt have peace, but I will give one thing more. ""Yea, surely," said Bearne. "Thou must go with us to Eastrey, then,"Sigmund said. "Thou shalt as easily win into heaven as thither,"says Bearne, "while the weather is in this quarter. ""Then thou shalt fare to Scufey, if Ossur is at home. ""Thou shalt have thy will here," says Bearne, "and I guess Ossur will be there. "

The next night they went to Scufey, and made the island as the night was dying, as before. It happened in such timely wise for Sigmund, that there was no man on the watch at the One-Man's-Path on Scufey. So up they went straightway, and fifty men with them which Bearne gave them. They got to the earthwork, and by this Ossur and his men were at work, and Ossur asked what manner of men they were that they come thither. Sigmund told them his name. "Thou mayst well be deemed to have business with us," said Ossur, "and now I will offer thee this settlement, that the best man in the Fareys give doom on our case. ""There shall no settlement be between us two," said Sigmund, "save I alone make it. ""I will not have things settled that way," says Ossur, "by giving thee self-doom. I do not see that there is so little likeness between us two men or our cases that I should brook that. "Sigmund answered and said to his men, "Do you make for this banterer in the work; but I will seek a plan to follow. "Harold Ironhead was sturdy in counsel; he would have no settlement.

And now Sigmund's men made an onslaught on the work, and the others held it. But Sigmund went up to the work and looked well at it. He was armed in this wise that day: he had a helm on his head, and he was girt with a sword; he had an axe in his hand, silver-mounted and snag-horned, with the haft covered; the best of weapons it was. He was clad in a red kirtle, and a light mail-jack over it; and it was the talk of both friends and foes that there had never yet come into the Færeys such a man as he was.

Now Sigmund spied a place where the wall of the work had tumbled down a little, and it was somewhat easier to win in there than in another place. With that he stepped back from the work and then took a run at it, and got so far up that he stuck the crook of the axe on to the wall of the work, and then let himself up quickly by the axe-shaft, and in this way got inside the work. A man ran upon him quickly, and hewed at him with his sword. Sigmund warded the blow off him with the axe, and then drove at him with the axe-horn, so that the axe stood deep in his breast, and he fell dead with the blow. Ossur saw it and ran quickly upon Sigmund, and hewed at him, but Sigmund put the blow aside again, and hewed at Ossur with his axe, and struck off his right hand, and his sword fell down with it. Then he struck him again in the breast, so that the axe went right into him, and then Ossur fell.

And now men rushed at Sigmund, but he sprang out backwards off the wall of the work, and came down on his feet. They made much ado over Ossur's body till he was dead. Then Sigmund told the men that were still inside the work that they had two choices in their hands, namely, that he should cut them off from food in the work or burn them therein, or else they should come to a settlement, and let him have the awarding of it. So they let him take self-doom and gave themselves up.

Of Thore it must be told that he bore up for Southrey, and met Sigmund after these things had happened.

And now messages passed between Sigmund and Thrond about a settlement, and peace was made for the time, and a meeting set between them in Streamsey at Thorshaven, for there is the Færeyfolks' moot-stead. Thither came Sigmund, Thrond, and a great gathering. Thrond was very cheerful, and a

settlement was talked of. Thrond said, "It cannot be gainsaid that I was at the fight when thy father, kinsman Sigmund, was slain. I will give thee now,"said he, "such a settlement as shall be of the greatest honour to thee, and thou thyself shalt be best pleased with, namely, I will that thou fix the whole settlement between us as thou wilt. ""I will not have that," said Sigmund, "but I will have Earl Hacon make the award between us, or else we will not be set at one at all, and this I think best of all; but if we are to be set at one, we will both go and seek Earl Hacon. ""I had far rather, kinsman,"said Thrond, "that thou should make the award; but I must lay down one thing, namely, that I keep my holding here and my headship as I have them now. ""There shall be no settlement," said Sigmund, "save the one that I have given thee. "And when Thrond saw that the other was the stronger, then they settled it between them in that way, and they were both to go to Norway in the summer.

The second ship fared out to Norway at harvest-tide, and aboard her many of the men that had followed Sigmund out. Sigmund was out in Scufey all through the winter, and Thore his kinsman with him, and Harold Ironhead also, and many men with them. Sigmund kept great state and store at his homestead. The winter passed, and Sigmund got his ship ready. Thrond got ready a merchantman that he had. And each knew what the other was doing. Sigmund sailed as soon as he was bound. There were with him on this cruise Thore and Harold Ironhead, and nigh twenty men aboard. They made land at Norway off South Mære, and asked after Earl Hacon, and he was not far off, and they went to him at once. Earl Hacon welcomed Sigmund and his fellows, and Sigmund told him about the settlement between Thrond and himself. The Earl said, "Thou and Thrond are not a match in cunning, and I fear that he is not likely to come and see me very soon. "

The summer went by, and Thrond never came. A ship came out from the Færeys and brought news that Thrond had been driven back, and his ship so broken that it was not seaworthy.

Chapter 25

Then Sigmund told the Earl he would fain have him make his award between him and Thrond, albeit he was not come. The Earl said it should be so: "I will give thee a weregild for each of the two brethren, a third weregild for Thrond’s counsel against you, when he would have had you slain after he had slain your fathers, a fourth weregild you shall have because Thrond sold you into thraldom. To the headship over a quarter of the Færeys, which thou now hast, thou shalt add as much out of Thrond’s lot and of Ossur’s heritage as shall make thine own lot half the islands. And half shall fall to my keeping, because Hafgrim and Thrond slew my house-carles Breste and Beine. Halfgrim shall go without weregild, because of the slaying of Breste, and his onslaught on sackless men. There shall no weregild be paid for Ossur, because he wrought no uprightly when he sat him down in thy heritage, where also he was slain. Thou shalt share the weregilds between thee and Thore thy kinsman as it likes thee. Thrond shall have his holding if he keeps this settlement. Thou shalt hold all the islands in fee of me,"said the Earl, "and pay me scot for my part. "Sigmund thanked the Earl for this award, and abode with him all the winter. In the spring he went out to the Færeys, and Thore his kinsman with him, but Harold Ironhead stayed behind. Sigmund made a good passage and came to the Færeys and summoned Thrond to meet him at a moot at Thorshaven in Streamsey. Thither came Thrond and much people. Sigmund said that Thrond had taken but little heed of the settlement they had made, and gave out the Earl’s award, and bade Thrond do one thing or the other, "now either keep the settlement or break it. "Thrond bade Sigmund give his own award himself, and said that he would be best pleased, and also that he should come off best by so doing. Sigmund said that he would not shrink in this matter, and bade him "do quickly one thing or the other, yea or nay. "Moreover, he told him that he was every whit as fain they should stay at odds as they were. Thrond chose rather to take the award, and prayed him to tarry a while for the paying of the fee, for the Earl had given it that the fee should be paid within a half-year. And at men’s request Sigmund let it go so that the fee should be paid within three

years. Thrond said that he thought it very well that his kinsman Sigmund should have the headship as long as he had had it before, and that it was fair that it should be so. Sigmund said that he need not use such vain compliments, and that he should never take them to himself. They parted with all men set at one. Thrond asked Laf Ossursson home to Gate to be fostered there, and there he grew up.

In the summer Sigmund got his ship ready to fare to Norway, and Thrond paid up a third of the fee, but he stumbled a good deal over it. Sigmund got together Earl Hacon's scot before he sailed from the islands. He made a good passage and made Norway with his ship, and went straightway to see Earl Hacon and bring him his scot. The Earl welcomed Sigmund and Thore his kinsman and all their fellows, and they abode with the Earl all that winter.

Chapter 26

The summer after this winter, when he became Earl Hacon's liegeman at Yuletide, Sigmund fared up country with the Earl to the Frosta-moot, and there Sigmund opened the case of Thorkel his father-in-law to the Earl praying him that he would inlaw him and give him his land to hold freely. And Earl Hacon quickly gave Sigmund his asking. Moreover, he let send for Thorkel and his kindred, and Thorkel and his wife stayed with Earl Hacon that winter, and Thurið their daughter also. She had brought forth a woman-child the summer that Sigmund went away, and the maid was called Thora. The next spring Earl Hacon gave Thorkel Dryfrost a reeveship out in Orkdale, and there Thorkel set up his homestead, and there he abode all the time that this story tells of. Soon after this Sigmund rode out to Orkdale to see Thorkel, and he welcomed him kindly. Then Sigmund did his errand and asked for Thurið in marriage. Thorkel took his request well, and thought that honour and worship would come of it both to himself and his daughter and to them all. Sigmund drank his bride-ale with Earl Hacon at Hlathe, and the Earl kept the feast up for seven nights; and Thorkel Dryfrost was made Earl Hacon's henchman and became a dear friend of his. After that they fared home, but Sigmund and his wife abode with the Earl till the harvest-tide, when he went out to the Færeys, and Thurið his wife and Thora his daughter with him.

There was peace in the islands that winter. In the spring men fared to the moot in Streamsey, and much people came thither, Sigmund also and his following with him. Thrond came thither, and Sigmund asked for the second third of his money, and told him that he ought by right to have all, but he would not, for the sake of them that begged him not to require it now. Thrond answered, "It hath so happened, kinsman," said he, "that the man named Laf the son of Ossur is abiding with me. I bade him to my home when we two were set at one. Now I pray thee, kinsman, give Laf some set-off for the sake of his father Ossur, whom thou slewest, and let me pay him the money of thine that I owe thee. ""I shall not do so," said Sigmund, "but thou shalt pay me my money. ""Nay, but it must seem best to thee [to do as I say]," said Thrond. Sigmund answered, "Pay thou the money or worse shall come of it. "Then Thrond told out a half of the third, and then said that he was not ready to pay any more. Then Sigmund went up to Thrond, and he had the silver-mounted axe in his hand that he slew Ossur with, and set the axe-horn to Thrond's breast, and told him that he would thrust it deep enough for him to feel it sorely unless he told him out the money then and there. Then spake Thrond, "A troublesome man art thou," said he, and bade his men go into his booth for the money-bag that lay there and see whether there was any silver still over. He went and brought the money-bag to Sigmund, and the money was weighed and it did not come up to what Sigmund ought to have had. With that they parted.

That same summer Sigmund fared to Norway with Earl Hacon's scot, and was welcomed of him there, and abode a short while with the Earl, and then fared back to the Færeys and sat there through the winter. His kinsman Thore was ever with him. Sigmund was much beloved out there in the islands. He and Swiney-Bearne kept the settlement that was between them well, and Bearne ever came between Sigmund and Thrond or worse would have happed. In the spring men fared to the Streamsey-moot,

and much people came thither. Sigmund asked Thrond for his money, but Thrond asked for weregild in the name of Laf Ossursson for his father. And many men spoke up in the matter that they should make a good settlement. Sigmund answered, "Thrond will pay Laf no better than he pays me, but for the sake of good men's words the debt shall stand over, but I do not give it up and I do not pay it as weregild. "With that they parted and went home from the moot.

Sigmund gat him ready to fare to Norway in the summer with Earl Hacon's scot, and was late bound. He sailed for the deep sea as soon as he was bound. Thurið his wife stayed behind, but Thore his kinsman went with him. They made a good run, and made Throndham late in the harvest-tide. Sigmund went straight to Earl Hacon and was welcomed by him.

Sigmund was seven and twenty winters old when this happened. He stayed on with Earl Hacon.

Chapter 27

That winter the Wickings of Iom came to Norway and fought there with Earl Hacon and his sons. The kinsmen Sigmund and Thore were in the fight with Earls Hacon and Eric, and it is said that Sigmund was the first man to board the warship of Bue the Thick, who was fighting in the fiercest wise, and Thore was the next with thirty men after him. And when Sigmund and Bue came to sword-play with one another, Sigmund saw that he could not match Bue in main strength and great strokes, and betook him to his feat of arms, and cast his shield and sword up in the air, and so shifted them in his hands, as he was often wont to do. Bue had not warded himself against this, and Sigmund with his left hand hewed off Bue's hand at the wrist, and then leapt back to his ship and seven men with him, for all the rest were slain of them that had followed him and Thore. Then Bue leapt overboard and his ship was cleared. Next spring Earl Hacon gave great gifts to Sigmund before they parted, and the kinsmen sailed out to the Færeys and sat down there in peace, and Sigmund alone held sway over all.

Chapter 28

It must now be told that when King Olave had been two winters in Norway, and had christened all Throndham that winter, he sent a message out to the Færeys to Sigmund Brestesson bidding him come and see him, and he had it put in the message that Sigmund should win worship and become the greatest man in the Færeys if he would become his man.

Chapter 29

As the summer passed, King Olave fared north of Throndham and came to South Mære, and as he lay at guesting with a rich franklin, there came out of the Færeys, according to the king's bidding, Sigmund Brestesson and Thore his kinsman. When Sigmund came to the king, the king welcomed him as blithely as might be, and they soon fell to talk together. The king said, "Thou hast done well, Sigmund, not to sleep over this cruise; and for this cause chiefly did I bid thee here, for that much was told me of thy boldness and skill, and I will gladly be thy friend indeed, if thou wilt hearken to me in the one thing that I think of most worth. Some men say that fellowship between us two would not be unbecoming, because we are both called men of prowess, and have long tholed toil and trouble before we won the worship we ought to have, for we two have had no unlike lots in our outlawry and bondage. Thou wert a child, and sat by when thy father was slain sackless, but I was in my mother's womb when my father was betrayed and slain for nothing that he had done, but for the wickedness and greed of his kinsmen. It hath also been told me that, far from offering thee boot for thy father, thy kinsmen bade slay thee as well as thy father, and that thou wert afterward sold into thralldom, yea, that money was paid that thou mightest become a bondsman and a thrall and an outcast and a wanderer

withal from thine own and from thine own land; and that thou hadst no helper in an unknown land for a long while, save that men who knew thee not showed thee mercy by His help who is mighty in all things. But things not unlike those I have heard tell of thee have happened to me. As soon as I was born ambush was laid for me, and I was hunted for, nay, my life was compassed by my own countrymen, so that my mother was brought low and had to fly with me from her father's countrymen and her kinsmen and all that she had. So passed the first three winters of my life. Then we were both taken by Wickings, and then I parted with my mother, so that I never saw her again. I was thrice sold into thraldom. Then I was in England with men that I knew not till I was nine winters old. Then came thither one of my kinsmen who knew my kindred, and he loosed me out of bondage and took me away with him east into Garthric, and there I was other nine winters in outlawry, though I was at that time held a free man. Then I grew somewhat near manhood, and won greater honour and worship at King Waldemar's hand than would seem likely for an outlander, though it was after the manner of the honour thou gottest at the hands of Earl Hacon. And now it hath so come about after all, that each of us is come into his father's heritage and to the land of his birth after long lack of happiness and honour. And now, above all, inasmuch as I have heard that thou hast never slain offerings to false gods after other heathen men's guise, therefore have I good hope that the high King of heaven, Maker of all things, will lead thee by my words to the knowledge of His holy Name and holy Faith, and make thee my fellow in the right faith, as thou art my match in strength and all feats of skill, and other of His merciful gifts which He hath given to thee as He did to me, long before I had any knowledge of His glory. Now the same all-swaying God grant that I bring thee to the true Faith and into His service, so that thereafter thou mayst by His mercy, after my example and at my urging, bring all thy liegemen to His glory; which thing also shall, I think, come to pass. Thou shalt also, if thou wilt hearken to my words, as I have before said, and serve God truly with steadfastness, get friendship and worship of me, although that is nothing worth by the side of the honour and bliss that Almighty God will give thee, and every other man who keeps His commandments for the love of His Holy Ghost, to reign together in the highest glory of His heaven. "When the king had done speaking, Sigmund answered, "It is known to you, lord, moreover it was told of in your speech, that I was bound in service to Earl Hacon. He gave me his good favour, and I was right well pleased with my way of life, for he was faithful and wise of counsel and loving to his friends, as he was grim and false to his foes. But great unlikeness is there between your two faiths, and as far as I can guess from your fair words, this faith that thou holdest is in all ways better and fairer than that which thou heathen men hold, therefore I am willing to follow your counsel and win your friendship. And I would not offer sacrifices to false gods, because I saw long ago that that usage was of no good, although I knew none better. "King Olave was glad, when he heard the words that Sigmund spake, that he took his counsel so wisely. And Sigmund was baptized and all his fellows, and the king had them taught the holy lore. Sigmund was then with the king through the winter in great honour.

Chapter 30

When the spring was coming in, the king fell on a day to talk with Sigmund, and said that he was minded to send him out to the Færeys to christen the folk that dwelt there. Sigmund said that he would rather not do that errand, but at last said he would do the king's will. Then the king made him lord over all the islands, and gave him wise men to baptize the folk and teach them the needful lore. Sigmund sailed when he was bound, and sped well on his way. When he came to the Færeys he summoned the franklins to a moot in Streamsey, and much folk came thither. And when the moot was set, Sigmund stood up and set forth his business at length, telling all that had happened since he had gone eastward to Norway to see King Olave Tryggwesson. Moreover, he said that the king had laid all the island under his lordship, and most of the franklins took this very well. Then Sigmund went on, "I would likewise have you know that I have taken another faith, and am become a Christian man. I have also this errand and bidding from King Olave, to turn all folk in the island to the true faith. "Thrond

answered his speech, and said that it was right the franklins should talk over this hard matter among themselves. The franklins said this was well spoken. Then they went to the other side of the moot-field, and Thrond told the franklins that the right thing clearly was to refuse to fulfil this command, and brought things so far by his fair speeches that they were all of one mind thereon. But when Sigmund saw that all the folk had crowded over to Thrond's side, so that there was none stood by him save his own men who were christened, he said, "Too much might have I given Thrond today. "And now men began to crowd back to where Sigmund was sitting; they bore their weapons aloft, and carried themselves in no peaceful wise. Sigmund and his men sprang up to meet them. Then spake Thrond, "Let men sit down and carry themselves more quietly. Now I have this to tell thee, kinsman Sigmund; we franklins are all of one mind on this errand thou hast done, namely, that we will by no means change our faith, and we will set on here in the moot and slay thee, unless thou give it up and bind thyself fast never more to carry this bidding to the islands. "And when Sigmund saw that he could not then bring this matter of the faith about, and was not strong enough to deal with all the folk that was come together there by the strong hand, it ended in his binding himself to what they wished with witnesses and hand-plight. And with that the moot broke up.

Sigmund sat at home in Scufey that winter, and was right ill-pleased that the franklins had cowed him, although he did not let his mind be known.

Chapter 31

One day in the spring, what time the races ran faster and men thought no ship could live on the main or between the islands, Sigmund set out from home in Scufey with thirty men and two ships, saying that he would run the risk and carry out the king's errand or else die. They ran for Eastrey and made the island; they got there at nightfall without being seen, made a ring round the homestead at Gate, drove a trunk of wood at the door of the house where Thrond slept, and broke it down, then laid hands on Thrond and led him out. Then said Sigmund, "It happens now, as it often does, Thrond, that things go by turns. Thou didst cow me last harvest-tide, and gave me two hard things to choose between; and now I will give thee two very unlike things to choose between: the one is good---that thou take the true faith and let thyself be baptized, or else thou shalt be slain here on the spot; and that is a bad choice for thee to make, for thereby thou shalt swiftly lose thy wealth and earthly bliss in this world, and get instead woe and the everlasting torments of hell in the other world. "But Thrond said, "I will not fail my old friends. "Then Sigmund sent a man to kill Thrond, and put a great axe in his hand; but as he went up to Thrond with the axe on high, Thrond looked at him and said, "Strike me not so quickly. I have something to say first. Where is my kinsman Sigmund?""Here am I," said he. "Thou alone shalt settle between me and thee, and I will take thy faith as thou wilt. "Then said Thore, "Hew at him, man!"But Sigmund said, "He shall not be cut down this time. ""It will be thy bane and thy friends' as well if Thrond get off today!" said Thore. But Sigmund said that he would risk that. Then Thrond was baptized by the priest and all his household. Sigmund made Thrond come with him when he was baptized. And then he went through all the Færeys and stayed not till the whole people was christened. Then he gat his ship ready in the summer, and was minded to sail to Norway to take King Olave his scot and bring Thrond of Gate to him. Now, when Thrond was aware that Sigmund meant to take him to the king, he would fain have begged off going; but Sigmund would not have it, and struck the land-tents as soon as the wind was fair. But before they had gone far on the main they were met by a great swell and storm, and were driven back thereby to the Færeys, and their ship was wrecked and all their gear lost. But of the men most were saved. Sigmund saved Thrond and many others. Thrond said that they would never make a smooth run if they made him go with them against his will. Sigmund said he should go all the same, though he did take it ill. Then he took another ship and goods of his own to give the king instead of his scot, for he had no lack of gear. They put to the sea for the second time, and got a little farther on their way than before, when there met them a great wind blowing in

their teeth that drove them back again to the Færeys and wrecked their ship. Then Sigmund said that he thought some stoppage must have been laid upon their cruise. Thrond said it would be so as often as they tried it if they took him with them against his will. So Sigmund let him loose on the understanding that he should swear a holy oath to have and hold the Christian faith, and to be trusty and true to King Olave and to Sigmund, not to hold back or hinder any man in the islands from keeping faith and homage to them, to forward and fulfil the bidding of King Olave, and any other thing that he should bid him do in the Færeys. And Thrond swore freely the fullest oaths that Sigmund could put to him. Then Thrond fared home to Gate, and Sigmund sat in Scufey at his homestead through the winter, and it was late in harvest-tide when they were driven back the second time. And he let mend the ship that was least hurt. And the winter was quiet and tidingless in the Færeys.

Chapter 32

When Sigmund Brestesson had christened all the Færeys, according to the word of King Olave Tryggwesson, he thought to take Thrond of Gate east with him, but was twice driven back as is above written. Albeit he got himself bound again and made a good run, and got to Norway and found King Olave north in Nithoyce, and brought him the money which he had made ready instead of the Færeys' scot that he had lost the summer before, and also the scot that was to be paid up then. The king welcomed him, and he dwelt with the king many days that spring. Sigmund told the king clearly all that had happened, and of the change that was wrought in Thrond and the other islanders. The king answered, "Ill it is that Thrond hath not come to see me, and it is a mischief to your home there in the islands that he is not driven abroad, for it is my belief that he is the worst man in all the Northlands. "

One day in the spring King Olave said to Sigmund, "We will amuse ourselves today, and prove our feats of skill. ""I am not the man for that, lord," said Sigmund, "but thou shalt have thy way in this as in all other things that are in my hands. "Then they tried their might in swimming and shooting and other feats or skill and strength, and men say that Sigmund came very nigh King Olave in many feats, albeit he came short of him in all, as did every other man that was then living in Norway.

Chapter 33

It is said that once on a time as King Olave sat at drink, for he had given a feast to his house-carles, and there were many men bidden to it, Sigmund also was there, for he was in great favour with the king, and there sat but two men between the king and Sigmund. And it happened that Sigmund stretched forth his arm on the board. The king looked and saw that Sigmund had a thick gold ring on his arm, and he said, "Let me see the ring, Sigmund. "He took the ring off his arm and handed it to the king. Then the king said, "Wilt thou give me this ring?""It was in my mind, lord," said Sigmund, "never to part with that ring. ""I will give thee another instead," said the king, "that shall be no less and no uglier than this. ""I cannot part with this," said Sigmund, "for I gave my word to Earl Hacon with all my heart when he gave me the ring that I never would, and I must hold to it, for the sake of his goodwill to me that gave it, for the Earl also dealt well with me in many ways. "Then said the king, "Think as well of him as thou wilt, both of the ring and of him that gave it thee, but from this day thy luck shall leave thee and this ring shall be thy bane. I know that no less clearly than I know how thou gottest it and whence it came to thee; and, when I asked thee for it, it was rather because I wished to save my friend from ill than from any wish to have thy ring. "The king was as red as blood in the face. And with that the talk dropped, but the king was never afterward so blithe to Sigmund as before. Yet he dwelt with the king for a time, but fared out to the Færeys early that summer. King Olave and he took leave of each other in all friendship, and Sigmund never saw him again. When Sigmund was come out to the Færeys he sat down in his homestead in Scufey.

Chapter 34

Now when King Olave fell at Swold before Earl Eric and the two kings, the Earls Sweyn and Eric sent word out to Sigmund Brestesson in the Færeys, bidding him come and see them. Sigmund did not sleep over it, but fared to Norway, and went to see the Earls north at Hlathe in Throndham. They welcomed him with all their hearts, and brought to mind their former friendship. Sigmund was made their house-carle, they gave him the Færeys in fee, and parted with him in blithe and friendly wise. Sigmund fared out to the Færeys at harvest-tide.

Chapter 35

There are three men told of in the story that all grew up at Gate with Thrond. One was named Sigurd; he was the son of Thorlac, and brother's son to Thrond. He was a big man and strong, a comely man to look on; he had light hair that fell in curls; he was skilled in all feats, and it is said that he came nighest of all men to Sigmund Brestesson in feats of skill. Thord was the name of his brother. He was called the Low. He was very stoutly built and strong of his body. The third was named Geat the Red; he was Thrond's sister's son. They were all three big strong men. Laf was fostered at Gate also, and they were all about the same age.

These were the children of Sigmund and Thurið. Thora was their eldest daughter; she was born on the fells. She was a big, brave-looking woman, not very pretty, but of wisdom above her years. Thoralf was the name of their eldest son, the second was Stangrim, the third Brand, the fourth Here. They were all hopeful men.

It fared now with Christendom in the Færeys as it did in other parts of the Earl's realm---each man lived as he would, but they themselves held fast to their faith. Sigmund held fast to his faith and all his household with him, and let build a church at his homestead. Of Thrond it is told that he changed his faith a good deal and all his company with him.

In those days the Færey folk called a moot; thither came Sigmund and Thrond of Gate and much people. Thrond spoke and said to Sigmund, "Things have turned out so, kinsman Sigmund, that I shall ask thee now for boot in the name of Laf Ossursson, which thou shalt give him for his father. "Sigmund answered that they ought to keep to the award that Earl Hacon had made between them on all the matters that were at issue between them. Thrond said that it would be most seemly to give Laf such boot for his father as the best men out in the island should fix on. Sigmund said it was no good pulling and hauling over it, for he would never have it so. Then Thrond said, "It is most true that thou art a hard man to take by the loins, but it may yet be that my kinsmen who are growing up in my house will think thee by no means fair in thy dealing, in that thou wilt not share thy lordship with them, though no more than half that thou hast is thine own by right, and it is not likely that men will let this go on long. Thou hast brought me to shame these many times," said he, "but the greatest was when thou cowedst me into changing my faith; that hour I think the worst of all that I have ever passed. And thou mayst brood over it well, for men will not always be willing to have their rights cut short by thee. "Sigmund said that he should sleep soundly in spite of all his threats. With that they parted.

Chapter 36

It is told that one day in the summer Sigmund Brestesson fared out to little Dimun in a boat, and Thore and Einar the Southrey-man with him. For Sigmund wished to get some of the sheep on that island for slaughter. Sigmund and Thore were on the island when they saw some men landing on the island and the glittering of their bright shields. They counted them, and they were twelve men that had landed.

Sigmund asked who they could be. Thore said he could tell that they were the Gate-Beardies, Thrond and his kinsmen. "And what shall we do now?" said he. "That is not hard to tell," said Sigmund; "we will go all together and meet them with our weapons in our hands, and if they make for us, we will run down, each by himself, and get together where the path is that goes up the island. "Thrond and his men fixed it among them that Laf should set on Sigmund and the Thorlacssons with him, and a fourth man with him. Sigmund and they that were with him heard it. They went towards each other, and Thrond and his men ran towards them, but Sigmund and they that were with ran down, each his own way, and got into the path. But one man had got there before them. Sigmund was the first to get at him, and he made short work of him. Then Sigmund kept the path, but Thore and Einar ran down to Thrond's boat. There was one man there holding the painter and another on board. Thore ran at the man that was holding the painter and slew him. Einar ran to Sigmund's boat and launched it. Sigmund was keeping the path, but now he leapt down to the sea on to the shore to try and get at their boat and felled one of their crew on the shore. Then he leapt on board their boat and Thore after him, and threw the man overboard that was in it. Then they rowed away in the two boats, but the man that Sigmund threw overboard swam ashore. Thrond and his men lit a beacon-fire, and men rowed out to them and took them home to Gate. Sigmund gathered men to him and was minded to lay hands on Thrond and his kinsmen on their island, before he heard that they had got away.

A little later on that summer Sigmund and the other two took boat to go and see after his rents. They rowed down a narrow sound between some islands, and when they got out of the sound they saw a ship sailing towards them, and it was very near them already. They could tell who the men were; they were the Gate-Beardies Thrond and eleven men with him. Then speaks Thore: "They are mighty near us," said he, "and what shall we do now, kinsman Sigmund?""No need of much craft," said Sigmund; "but we will do this; row towards them; then they will strike their sail, and when our boat is close alongside of theirs, do you two handle your swords and cut away the stays on the side the sail is not lying, and I will do what I see best to do meanwhile. "So they rowed towards them, and when they lay close alongside of Thrond's, Thore and Einar shore away all the stays on the side the sail was not lying. But Sigmund caught up a fork that lay in his boat and drove it so hard at the hull of their boat that the keel came up out of the water as she heeled over; then he shifted the fork to the side of the boat on which the sail lay, for she had heeled over on that side, and bore on it with all his might. With that the boat capsized suddenly, and five of Thrond's crew were drowned there. Thore said that they ought to kill every one they could come up with. But Sigmund said he would not have that, but that he would rather put them to as much shame as he could. With that they left them. Sigurd Thorlacsson called out, "We shall fare as ill at Sigmund's hands this time as the last. "Then he righted the boat and saved many of the men. When Thrond got on board he said, "Luck must have shifted from Sigmund to us, for it must have warped his eyes just now so that he slew us not, though he could have done as he liked with us; let us therefore fear no ill henceforward, and never stay till we have Sigmund in hell. "They said they were right fain of that, and so they went home to Gate. The summer went by, and they had no more dealings with each other for that time.

Chapter 37

It came to pass that one day, as the winter was drawing nigh, Thrond gathered men to him, and there came to him sixty men, and he told them they should go to seek Sigmund, for he said that he had dreamed they would get very near him this time. They had two ships and a picked crew. There were with Thrond on this raid Laf Ossursson, Sigurd Thorlacsson, Thord the Low, Geat the Red, an Eastrey franklin named Stangrim, and Eldearn Combhood, who had been long with Thrond. Swiney-Bearne took no part in these things ever since he and Sigmund were set at one. Thrond and his men set out and got to Scufey, and drew up their ships, and went up altogether till they came to the path on to the island. Scufey is such good vantage-ground that they say the island could never be won if there were

but ten men to keep the path; came there never so many, they should never win it. Eldearn Combhood went up first, and met Sigmund's warder by the path; they made at each other at once, and the end of their struggle was that they fell over the cliff together and got their death there both of them. Then ThroND went up and they all, and came to the homestead and made a ring round it: and their coming was so unawares that they within knew nought of it till they broke down the doors. Sigmund and his men ran quickly to their weapons, and all those that were in the house did likewise. Yea, Thurið the goodwife took weapon in hand, and did as well as any man of them. Thrond and his fellows set fire to the houses, and set on the homestead with fire and weapons, and made a hard onslaught; but when they had been fighting for some time, goodwife Thurið went out to the doors and called out, "How long are you going to fight with the headless men, Thrond?"said she. Thrond answered, "As true as day," said he, "Sigmund must have got away. "Then he went round the houses withershins whistling after them, till he came to the mouth of an earth-house a little way off the homestead. There he stopped and put his other hand down on the ground, and then brought it up to his nose once or twice. At last he said, "Three men have gone this way---Sigmund, Thore, and Einar. "Then he went about for a little snuffling as if he were tracking their slot like a hound; then bidding none follow him, he went on till he came to a rift. Now this rift runs across the island of Scufey. Then he said, "They have gone this way, and Sigmund must have leapt over here, whatever they have done with themselves. Now we will deal out our company," says Thrond; "Laf Ossursson and Sigurd Thorlacsson shall go to the other end of the rift and some of the men with them, but I will go to the other end, and we will meet on the other side of the rift. "They did so. Then Thrond called out, "Now is the time, Sigmund, to show thyself if thou hast as brave a heart and wouldst be thought as bold a man as thou hast long been held. "It was then as dark as it could be. Soon after this a man leapt over the rift to where Thrond and his men were, and hewed at Stangrim Thrond's neighbour with his sword, and clove him down to the shoulders. It was Sigmund. Then he leapt swiftly backward over the rift again. "There goes Sigmund," says Thrond; "let us keep after them to the end of the rift. "They did so, and there Laf and Thrond and all their men met. Sigmund and his fellows had now got to a rock that jutted over the sea, and could hear men's voices all round them. Then Thore said, "Let us stand at bay here, as fate will have it. ""I am not fit for fighting," said Sigmund, "for I lost my sword when I leapt backward over the rift; let us therefore leap off the rock and betake us to swimming. ""We will do as it pleases thee," said Thore. They took that counsel, and leapt off the cliff into the sea. And when Thrond heard the splash he said, "There they go!Let us take boat as we can and follow them, some on sea and some on land. "And so did they, but found them not.

Chapter 38

Now it must be told of Sigmund and his friends that they swam for a while, heading for Southrey, for that was the nearest land. But it was a long sea-mile, and when they had swum halfway Einar said, "We must part here. "Sigmund said that should never be. "And do thou, Einar, lean on my shoulders!"And he did so. So Sigmund swam on for a while. Then Thore said, as he swam behind him, "Kinsman Sigmund, how long wilt thou flit a dead man on thy back?""I don't see that I need," said Sigmund. They swam on till they had only a fourth of the way to go, when Thore said, "All our lives long we have been together, kinsman Sigmund, and great love have we twain had towards each other; but now it looks as if our life together was come to an end. I have pushed on as far as I can, and now I would have thee look to thyself and thine own life and give no heed to me, for thou wilt risk thine own life, kinsman, if thou art cumbered with me. "But Sigmund said, "It shall never be that we two part so, kinsman Thore. We will both of us come to land or neither. "Then Sigmund took him on his shoulders, but Thore was so worn out that he could do hardly anything to help himself. Then Sigmund swam on till he got to Southrey. There was a surf running on the island, and Sigmund was so worn out by this time that he was now driven from the land, and another time borne towards it. And Thore slipped off his shoulders there and was drowned, but Sigmund got to land at last, and he was so worn out that he

could not walk, but he crawled up the shore and lay down on a heap of seaweed. This was at daybreak, and he lay there till it was quite light. There was a farmstead called Sandwick on the island a little way up, where dwelt a man named Thorgrim the Wicked, a big strong man, who held under Thrond of Gate. He had two sons, Ormstan and Thorstan, both hopeful men. Thorgrim the Wicked went down to the shore that morning, and he had a pole-axe in his hand. As he went by he saw red clothes sticking out of the seaweed heap; he pushed away the wrack and saw a man lying there. He asked him who he was. Sigmund told him his name. "Low lies our lord," said he, "but what hath wrought this?"Sigmund told him all that had happened. With that his sons came up. Then Sigmund prayed them to help him. Thorgrim did not answer at once, but began to talk to his sons in a low voice. "Sigmund has so much gear on him as it seems to me we have never owned the worth of, and his gold ring is mighty thick. The best thing we can do, it seems to me, is to slay him and then hide his body; it will never be known. "His sons spake against it for a while, but at last they were of the same mind. Then they went up to where Sigmund lay and caught hold of his hair, while Thorgrim the Wicked hewed off his head with the pole-axe. In this way Sigmund, that was so good a man in all ways, lost his life. They stripped off his clothes and gear, and then dragged him up under an earth-bank and buried him there. Thore's dead body was cast ashore, and they buried it beside Sigmund, and hid them both.

Chapter 39

Of Thrond and his fellows it must be told that they made homeward after what had happened, and the homestead in Scufey was saved by the time men got to it; it was not much burned, and few had lost their lives there. Goodwife Thurið, who was ever after called the Mighty Widow, kept the homestead at Scufey after her husband Sigmund, and there the children they two had had grew up, and they all promised to be good men. Thrond and Laf Ossursson now got all the Færeys into their hands, and held sway over them. Thrond offered Thurið the Mighty Widow to be set at one with her and her sons, but they would have nothing to do with it. Yet Sigmund's sons sought no help of the Lords of Norway, for they were but young as yet. And so two or three years went by, and there was peace in the Færeys.

One day Thrond told Laf Ossursson that he wished to seek a match for him. "Where shall we seek?"said Laf. "Where Thora Sigmund's daughter is," answered Thrond. "I don't think that is a likely look-out," says Laf. "You will never get a wife if you don't ask for one," said Thrond. They set out to Scufey with a few men, and were coldly welcomed. Thrond and Laf offered Thurið and her sons to be set at one with them according to the award of the best men in the islands. They did not answer at once. Then Thrond spoke for Laf and asked Thora Sigmund's daughter for him in marriage, saying that he thought it the most likely way to get a firm peace, and promising to better Laf's lot with much wealth. This was taken well by them all, but Thora herself made answer, saying, "Ye must think me right eager to marry; now I will set this price on my hand. If Laf will take his oath that he was not my father's bane, and that he set no men to slay him; then will I give you this task, that he shall find out what was my father's bane, or who wrought his death; and when these things are fulfilled, then we will be set at one with you, as it shall please my brothers and my mother, and all our kinsmen and friends. "They all thought this well said and wisely thought of, and it was settled so that Laf and Thrond promised what she wished: and with that they parted.

Chapter 40

A little after this Thrond gat him ready to set out from Gate, and Laf [would go] with him. They took ship and went twelve together. They got to Southrey and landed at Sandwick, Thorgrim the Wicked's homestead. This was some winters after Sigmund and his friend had lost their lives. They went up the island and came to the homestead. Thorgrim welcomed Thrond and his men, and they went in. Thrond and yeoman Thorgrim went into the inner room, but Laf and the others sat outside in the house by a

fire that was kindled for them. Thrond and Thorgrim had a long talk. Thrond said, "What do men guess was Sigmund Brestesson’s bane?""Men don’t think that is clearly known,’ answered Thorgrim, "but some guess that you must have found him on the shore or swimming off and slain him. ""That is a wicked guess and unlikely to boot," said Thrond, "for all men know that we wished to slay Sigmund, and why should we wish to murder him?And such things are not spoken with friendly intent. ""Others say," said Thorgrim, "that they must have sunk in their swim, or that Sigmund may have got to land somewhere, for he was a passing good man in many ways, and have been slain there, as he reached the land weak and worn out, and murdered!""That is a likely tale," says Thrond, "and it is my belief it was so; but come, fellow mine, is it as I think or not, that thou art he that wrought Sigmund’s death?"Thorgrim denied it as strongly as he could. "It will do thee no good to deny it," said Thrond, "for I think I know that thou art guilty of this deed. "He denied it as before. Then Thrond let call Laf and Sigurd to him and commanded that Thorgrim and his sons should be fettered; and it was done, and they were fettered and fast bound. Thrond had had a great fire kindled in the fire-house, and had four lattices set up, one at each corner; he drew also nine squares out all ways from the lattices. Then he sat down on a stool between the fire and the littices and bade no man speak to him, and they did as he bid them. He sat so for a time, and after a while there walked a man into the fire-house; he was dripping wet; they knew the man for Einar the Southrey-man. He walked up to the fire and stretched out his hands to it for a short time, then turned and went out again. After a while another man walked into the fire-house; he walked up to the fire also, stretched his hands to it, and then went out. They knew him for Thore. Soon after that a third man came into the fire-house; he was a big man, all bloody he was, and he had his head in his hand; they all knew him for Sigmund Brestesson. He stood for a while on the hearth, and then went out again. After this Thrond rose off his stool and drew a deep breath, and said, "Ye can see now what was these men’s bane. "Einar lost his life first, frozen to death or drowned, for he was the weakest of them; and Thore must have lost his next, and Sigmund must have carried him, and that must have tired him most of all; but he must have came ashore very weak, and these men have slain him, since he showed himself to us bloody and headless. "Thrond’s fellows held that he had spoken truly, and that it must have happened as he said. Then Thrond said that they must ransack everything, and so they did, but found no trace of aught. Thorgrim and his sons denied it all, and said they had not wrought the deed. Thrond told them it was no good for them to deny it, and bade his men ransack the house thoroughly, and they did so again. There was a big old ark standing in the fire-house. Thrond asked them whether they had ransacked the ark. They said they had not, and broke it open, but they could see nought but rubbish therein, though they searched it through for some time. Then said Thrond, "Turn the ark upside down," and they did so, and found a rag bag that had laid in the ark, and brought it to Thrond. He untied it, and there were a great many rags wrapped together in it, but at last Thrond found a great gold ring, and knew it was the ring that had belonged to Sigmund Brestesson, the one Earl Hacon had given him. And when Thorgrim saw this, he acknowledged the murder of Sigmund, and told all that had happened. He showed them also where Sigmund and Thore were buried; and they took their bodies away with them. Thrond likewise brought Thorgrim and his sons away with him. And afterwards they were both laid to earth, Sigmund and Thore, in the church at Scufey that Sigmund had built.

Chapter 41

After these things Thrond had a full moot gathered at Thorshavn in Streamsey, where the Færey folks’ moot-stead is, and there Thorgrim the Wicked and his sons told the slaying and death of Sigmund, so that all men at the moot heard them tell how they had slain him and afterwards murdered him. And when they had told their story, they were hanged there at the moot, and so ended their lives. Then Laf and his foster-father Thrond took up the matter of Thora’s wooing, offering her folk such a settlement withal as they should be pleased with: and the matter ended so that Laf took Thora Sigmund’s daughter to wife, and they were set at one with a full settlement. Laf took up his abode on his father’s

heritage at Temple in Southrey, and there was peace in the Færeys for some time. Thoralf Sigmund's son likewise took unto himself a wife, and set up his homestead in Dimun, and became a good franklin.

Chapter 42

Rightly have wise men written and truly told that King Olave had scot of all the lands that now lie under Norway, save Iceland only, first of the Orkneys and also of Shetland, the Færeys and Greenland. It is also told that, in the ninth year of his kingship, there came out from the Færeys to Norway, at the king's command, Lawman Gille, Laf Ossursson, Thoralf of Dimun, and many other franklins' sons. Thrond of Gate gat him ready to go, but when he was bound the falling sickness took him, so that he could not go, so that he stayed behind. But when the Færey men were come out to King Olave, he called them to him to talk with him and held a meeting of them, where he showed forth his business with them, that was the reason of his bidding them come to him, and spake to this end --- that he would have scot from the Færeys, and also that the Færey people must keep the law that king Olave gave them. At this meeting also it was shown by the king's words that he meant to take surety in this matter of those Færey men that were come thither, so that they should bind themselves with oaths to do these things. And he offered those men that were there these terms --- that the richest of them should set their hands in his and become his men, and take honour and friendship at his hands. The words of the king gave the Færey men an inkling of the way things would go if they would not do as the king wished; and though there were many meetings held on the matter, things went at last as the king wished. Laf, Gille, and Thoralf set their hands in his and became his hench-men, and all the Færey men swore oaths to King Olave that they would keep the law and right in the Færeys that he should set them, and pay the scot that he fixed. Then the Færey men gat them ready to fare home, and when they took leave of him the king gave gifts of friendship to them that had become his men. They went on their way when they were bound, and the king got a ship ready and men, and sent them out to the Færeys to take the scot there which the Færey people were to pay him. They were very soon bound, but of their faring there is nought but this to tell, that they never came back nor the scot either next summer. Men say that they never reached the Færeys, nor asked any man there for the scot. [And when he sent a second ship things went no better.]

Chapter 43

The [next] spring a ship had come out from Norway to the Færeys bearing messenges from King Olave to this end, that one of his house-carles in the Færeys, Laf Ossursson, Lawman Gille, or Thoralf of Dimun, should come to him. And when this bidding was brought to the Færeys and was told to those men, they took counsel among themselves what might be the meaning of it, and they all thought the same about it, namely, that the king must be wanting to know whether, as some men held for truth, any one in the islands had a hand in the ill fate of the king's messengers in those two ships, seeing that none of them had ever come back. They agreed that Thoralf should go, and he made him ready, and fitted out a merchant-ship that he had and manned it. They were ten or twelve on board, and when they were bound and waiting for a fair wind, it happened in Eastrey, one day when the weather was fair, that Thrond went into the hall, and Sigurd and Thord and Geat were lying there on the dais-benches. Then said Thrond, "Many things come about in a man's lifetime. It was a rare thing when we were young for able-bodied men to lie or sit about when it was fair weather, and it would not have seemed likely to your forefathers that Thoralf of Dimun would be a manlier wight than you. The merchant-man, too, which I have standing here in the boat-house, I reckon it is getting so old that it is rotting under the tar. Every house here, too, is full of wool that is turned to no account. Things should not go so if I were only a few years younger. "Sigurd leapt up and went out and called Thord and Geat, saying that he would not stand such taunts. They went out, and the housemen with them, and fell to

work and launched the merchant-man, and brought up her lading, and loaded the ship and fitted her out in a few days. They were also ten or twelve on board of her. Thoralf and they sailed out with the same wind, and kept in sight of each other all the time they were at sea. They brought up at Hern one day at dark. Sigurd lay farther out from the strand, but there was little space between them. It came to pass that evening when it was quite dark, that Thoralf and his men got ready to sleep, but before he slept he was minded to go ashore, so he landed and another man with him, and they went about their business, and when they were ready to go on board again, the man that was with him said that a cloth was suddenly cast over his head and he was lifted off the ground, and at the same time he heard a blow; then he was taken up and swung round off his feet over the sea beneath him and then thrown into it, and when he got ashore he went up to the place where he had left Thoralf, and found him there cloven down to the shoulders and dead. When Thoralf's crew were ware of this, they bare his body out to the ship and watched the body that night. King Olave was then in guesting at Lyger, and when news of this was brought him an arrow-moot was called, and the king came to the moot. He had summoned all the Færey men from both ships, and they were there at the moot. When the moot was set, the king stood up and spoke: "The tidings which have been brought to us here are such that it is well the like are seldom heard of. Here is a brave man's life taken, a man whom we believe sackless; now is there any man here at this moot who knows the doer of this deed?"But no man came forward. Then the king said, "I will not hide my mind on this matter, namely, that I lay it at these Færey men's doors. And it seems to me that it is most likely that Sigurd Thorlacsson smote the man, and Thord the Low threw the other into the sea; moreover, I should guess that it must have come about through this --- that they did not wish Thorlaf to tell of their wickedness, which they must have known they were guilty of, as indeed we have always thought, in the matter of the murder and evil deeds they wrought when my messengers were murdered out there. "When the king had done speaking, Sigurd Thorlacsson stood up and said, "I have never spoken before at a moot, so that I cannot be very ready of speech, but for all that I think that there is need enough now for me to answer something. I can guess well enough that this tale the king has just set forth must have come from under the tongues of more foolish and worse men than he is. It cannot indeed be gainsaid that those men are truly our foes; but it is a very unlikely tale that I should wish to do any harm to Thoralf, who was my foster-brother and very good friend; and were there any other reason for it, or any quarrel between Thoralf and us, I have wit enough to make me choose to do such a deed at home out in the Færeys, rather than here under thy very hands, O king!And here I deny the deed for myself and all of us ship-mates, and I will take such oath on it, as your law wills, or, if it seems fuller proof to thee, I will bear iron, and thou thyself shall be there at the ordeal. "

And when Sigurd had finished his speech, there were many that pleaded with the king that he would let Sigurd clear himself, for they thought that Sigurd had spoken well, and that he could not be guilty of the deed that was laid at his hands. The king answered, "There are two ways of looking at this man. If he is belied in this matter, he must be a good man; but, on the other hand, if it is not so, he must be a bolder man than any we have heard of; and that is rather what I think of him; but I guess he will soon bear witness himself to the truth in this matter. "Howbeit, at the prayer of men, the king took surety of Sigurd that he would bear the iron: he was to come next morning to Lyger, and the Bishop was to give him his ordeal there; and with that the moot broke up. The king went back to Lyger, but Sigurd and his mates went back to their ship. By this time the night was beginning to fall. Sigurd said to his fellows, "I may truly say that we have got into great danger, having no light deeds laid to our charge; moreover, the king is so crafty that our weird is clear enough if his wishes are to carry it. He first let slay Thoralf, and now he would make us bootless men, for it is a light thing he that risks himself with him will come off worst. There is a breeze from the fells blowing in here down the Sound, and my counsel is that we run our sail up to the truck and stand out to sea. Let Thrond come himself another summer to sell his wool if he likes; but if I get away, I do not think I shall ever come to Norway again. "This seemed good counsel to the Færey men, and they set to work to hoist their sail. They ran out to sea that night as fast as they could and never stopped till they got to the Færeys. Thrond showed them that he was

not pleased with their cruise, but they answered him roughly enough.

Chapter 44

King Olave soon heard that Sigurd and his mates were away. There was heavy talk held over their departure, and some there were that now held it likely that Sigurd and his mates were guilty of that which they denied that they had done. King Olave spoke little of the matter, but he thought that he now knew the truth of that which he guessed before. He went on his way thereafter, and took the guesting that was made ready for him. In the spring King Olave gat him ready to go out of Nithoyce, and gathered a great host to him, both out of Throndham and from other parts of the land farther north; and when he was ready to set out, he fared first south to Mre with his host and called together his levy, and so fared out of Reamsdale, and afterward south to South Mre, and lay in the Hereys and waited for his levy. He would often hold a house-moot there; and many things came to his ears that he thought needed to be talked over. One moot that he held he had set forth the matter, and told of the manscathe that he had gotten in the Færeys. "And the scot," said he, "that they promised me never comes. Now I am minded to send men thither after that scot. "He asked one man after another to take it up and get him ready for that errand, but gat ever the same answer, for they excused themselves from going. Then a man stood up in the moot, big and bold to look on; he had on a red kirtle, a helm [was] on his head; he was girt with a sword and had a halbert in his hand; he began to speak. "To tell the truth," quoth he, "there is little likeness between men here, for ye have a good king, but he has bad servants; ye say nay to the errand that he would send you on, but ye have often taken friendly gifts and many like things at his hands. As for me, hitherto I have not been the king’s friend and he has been my foe, and he says he has good cause for being so. But now, O king, I offer to go on this errand for thee, if no better man can be got. "The king answered, "Who is this bold man that answers our speech?Dost thou lift thyself up over all the other men that are here, for thou art willing to go, but they excuse themselves, when I thought they would surely yield to my wish?As to thee, I know thee not at all, and I wot not even thy name. "He answered, "My name is not far to seek, O king, and it is my belief that thou must have heard my name. I am called Carl the Mre-man. "The king answered, "So it is, Carl; I have heard talk of thee, and, to tell the truth, there have been times when, if we two had met, thou shouldst not have been able to tell tidings thereof; but now I will not behave worse than thou, and as thou offerest me thy help, I will take it willingly. And thou shalt come to me today, Carl, and be among my guests, and we will talk over this matter. "Carl said it should be so, and with that the moot broke up.

Chapter 45

Carl, the Mre-man had been a great Wicking and the worst of robbers, and the king had often set men after him to try and take his life, but Carl of Mre was of great lineage, and a man skilled in all manners of feats. But now he had undertaken this business, the king was reconciled to him, and took him to his closest friendship. He made all things ready for his cruise in the best way that might be. There were twenty men on board with him. The king sent word to his friends in the Færeys, and intrusted Carl to their good help --- that is, to Laf Ossursson and Lawman Gille --- and to this end he sent tokens to them. Carl set out as soon as he was bound; he had fair winds, and made the Færeys, and lay to in Thorshaven in Streamsey.

Then there was a moot called, and much folk came thither. Thrond of Gate came with a great following, and thither came also Laf and Gille, and many men with them. And when they had pitched their tents and made ready, they went to meet Carl the Mre-man, and they greeted each other in goodly wise. Then Carl gave them the message and tokens that King Olave had sent, and his greeting to Laf and Gille. They were glad of this, and asked Carl to their houses, and promised to do his errand and give him such good help thereto as they could. He took their offer thankfully. A little later Thrond

came up and welcomed Carl. "I am right glad," said he, "that such a mighty man should have come here to this land with our king’s errand, which we are all bound to fulfill; and I want one thing more --- for thee to take up thy winter quarters with me, and as many of thy crew as thou wilt, and so shall thy worship be higher even than before. "Carl said that he had undertaken to stay with Laf, "else would I gladly have accepted thy bidding. "Thrond answered, "Laf will win great worship by this; but is there nothing else that I can do to help you?"Carl said that he should think it a great boon if Thrond would get the scot together for him from Eastrey, and also from the other Northern Islands. Thrond said that he was bounden and holden by law to further the king’s command so far. Then Thrond went back to his booths, and nothing more happened at that moot. Carl went in to guesting with Laf Ossursson, and was with him all the winter. Laf got together the scot from Streamsey and from all the islands to the south of it.

Next spring Thrond took a great sickness: he had great pains in the eyes and other great ills beside; nevertheless, he got him ready to go to the moot, as was his wont. But when he came to the moot and his tent was pitched, he had a black tilt pitched underneath the other inside, so that it might be less dazzling. Now, when some days of the moot had gone by, Laf and Carl went to Thrond’s tent, and took many men with them.

Chapter 46

When they got to Thrond’s tent, there were some men standing outside. Laf asked whether Thrond was in his booth, and they said he was. Laf told them to ask him to come out. "Carl and I have business with him. "When they came back, they said that Thrond had the pains in his eyes so bad that he could not come out, and asked Laf and those with him to come in. Laf told his fellows to fare warily when they went into the tent. "Do not crowd, but let him go out first that came in last. "Laf went in first, and after him Carl and his fellows, and they went all-weaponed as if they were going into battle. Laf went in under the black tilt and asked where Thrond was. Thrond answered and greeted Laf. He took his greeting and then asked whether he had gathered any scot from the Northern Islands, and if the money would be paid. Thrond answered that what he had promised Carl had not slipped his mind, and that the scot should be rightly paid. "Here is a money-bag, Laf, that thou shalt take; the silver is in it. "Laf looked round the tent and saw few men there; there were a few lying on the dais-benches, but very few sitting up. Then Laf went up to Thrond and took the bag and carried it out of the tent into the light and poured out the silver into his shield, and turned the money over in his hands and told Carl to look over it. They looked it through for a little, and then Carl asked what Laf thought of the money. He answered, "I think every one of these pennies here is as bad a one as could be picked out in all the Northern Islands. "Thrond heard that and called out, "Is not the money good?"Laf answered him, "It is not," said he. Thrond said, "My kinsmen are great nithings, who cannot be trusted in anything. I sent them out in the spring to get the scot in from the Northern Islands, for I have been good for nothing this spring; but they must have taken bribes from the yeomen to take bad money for the scot which was not good enough to pass. But the next thing to do, Laf, is to look at the money which was paid me for my land-rent. "Laf gave back the silver, and took the other bag and carried it to Carl, and they ransacked it through. Then Carl asked what Laf thought of that money. "It is lacking," said he, "but not so that it would not be taken where what should be paid was carelessly laid down, but I will never take such money as this to King Olave. "With that a man that was lying on the dais-benches threw the hood off his head and said, "Sooth is the old saw, Age cows a man; and it is so with thee, Thrond, since thou lettest Carl the Mre-man cast back thy money to thee all day. "This was Geat the Red. Thrond leapt up at Geat’s speech and began to use foul words and to rebuke his kinsmen mightily. And when he stopped at last, he told Laf to give him back that money, "and do thou take this bag of money here, which my farmers brought me in the spring, and though my sight is now bad, yet a man’s own hand is his best help. "With that a man rose up from the dais-benches --- Thord the Low it was --- and said,

"We have got no little scolding for this Carl of Mre’s sake, and he shall be well repaid for it. "Laf took the silver and carried it to Carl, and they looked through it. Then Laf said, "No need to look long at this money. Send a man, Thrond, to see it weighed. "Thrond answered that he thought the best thing would be for Laf to see to it for him. Then Laf and his fellows went out a little way from the tent, and they sat down and weighed the silver. Carl took the helm off his head and put the silver in it as they weighed it out. [As they were weighing the money] they saw a man walking close to them with a pike-staff in his hand; he had a hat on his head, a green cloak, his feet were bare, and he had linen breeches bound on his legs; he stuck the pike-staff into the ground and left it there, saying as he walked off, "Look to it, Mre-Carl, that thou get no hurt from my pike-staff. "

Chapter 47

A little after that some weaponed men came up, calling lustily for Laf Ossursson to come as quick as he could to Lawman Gille’s booth. "Sigurd Thorlacsson has just ran in under the tent-edge and wounded a man to the death. "Laf leapt up and went off to see Lawman Gille, and all the men from his booth went with him, but Carl stayed behind and the Eastmen were standing in a ring round him. Geat the Red suddenly ran up and smote him with a hand-axe over men’s shoulders, and the stroke lighted on Carl’s head, but made no great wound. But Thord the Low caught up the pike-staff that was standing in the ground, and brought it down on the hammer of the axe, so that it drove the axe right into his head. With that a lot of men crowded out of Thrond’s tent. Carl was carried off dead. Thrond was as wrath as could be at this deed as far as words went, but he offered money that his friend might be atoned for. Laf and Gille held out against it, and would not take money for atonement. Sigurd was outlawed for the ill deed he had wrought for killing Gille’s booth-man, and Thord and Geat for the slaughter of Carl. The Eastmen got ready the ship which Carl had brought over there, and went back to meet King Olave, but it was not fated that any vengeance should be taken for those things, because of the war that was then in Norway.

And now the tale is ended of those things which came about through King Olave seeking scot from the Færeys. Howbeit there were great deeds done in the Færeys after Carl the Mre-man’s death, but they touch Thrond of Gate, Laf Ossursson, and Lawman Gille, and of them there are great stories told, which shall now be set forth.

Chapter 48

After the killing of Carl of Mre and the evil deed wrought on Lawman Gille’s booth-man, Thrond’s kinsmen, Sigurd Thorlacsson, Thord the Low, and Geat the Red, were driven abroad and thrust out of the Færeys. Thrond gave them a sea-going ship and some chattels, but they thought they were poorly treated, and had high words with Thrond, saying that he had got hold of their father’s heritage and would not give them any shares of it. Thrond said they had had much more than they had any right to, and told them that he had kept them for a long while, and often shared out goods and chattels among them, but got ill thanks for it. And now Sigurd and his mates put to sea. They were twelve together on board, and it was given out that they were going to make for Iceland. But when they had been a short while at sea a great storm sprung up, and the bad weather held on for nigh a week. All on land saw very well that this would be dead against Sigurd and his mates, and men boded ill of their cruise; and when the harvest-tide was over, wrecks of their ship were found on Eastrey. But when the winter came, ghosts were said to have been seen at the Gate and far and wide over Eastrey, and Thrond’s kinsmen showed themselves pretty often, and men got great damage at their hands; some got their bones broken, and others bodily hurts. They beset Thrond so hard that he dared not go anywhere alone. There was great talk about this all the winter.

When the winter was gone, Thrond sent word to Laf Ossursson to fix a meeting between them, and they did so. And when they met Thrond said, "We got into great danger last summer, fosterson, and it nearly went as far as the whole folk-moot coming to blows. Now, fosterson mine," said Thrond, "I should like a law to be made by our advice, that no man shall bear any weapon to the moot when men are talking over their law business and peaceful matters. "Laf said that was well said, "And I will talk over the matter with my kinsman, Lawman Gille. "Now Gille and Laf were sisters' sons. So they met together and talked it over between them. Gille answered Laf in those words: "It seems to me risky to trust Thrond, but we will agree to this, that all we king's-men have our weapons, and some of them that follow us, but that the commonalty go weaponless. "They settled between them that it should be so.

The winter passed, and in the summer men came to the moot at Streamsey. Now it happened one day that Laf and Gille walked from their booths to a height that there was on the island, and were talking together there, when they saw on the east of the island, under the sun, men walking up, a goodly company, to a headland there; they could see thirty in all go up. Fair shields and fine helms, axes and spears, glittered in the sunshine --- a most warlike troop it was. They saw, walking foremost, a big bold-looking man in a red kirtle, with a shield painted half blue and half gold. He had a helm on his head and a great halbert in his hand, and they thought they could tell him to be Sigurd Thorlacsson. Next to him walked a strong-built man in a red kirtle; he had a red shield withal; they thought they knew well enough who he was, namely, Thord the Low. The third man had a red shield with a man's face drawn thereon, and a great axe in his hand; this was Geat the Red. Laf and Gille went straight home to their booths. Sigurd and his men soon came up thither; they were all well weaponed. Thrond walked out of his booth to meet Sigurd and his fellows, and many men walked with him, all with their weapons. Laf and Gille had but few men against those that were with Thrond, but this was the greatest lack that few of them had any weapons. Thrond and his kinsmen now went up to Laf and Gille's following, and spake Thrond: "It hath so happened, fosterson Laf," quoth he, "that my kinsmen, who were driven so hastily out of the Færeys last time we met, have come hither, but we do not intend to be worsted by thee Gille this time. There are now two choices before you: the one to let me alone judge between you, but if ye will not have that, I will not stay my kinsmen from setting upon you as they will. "Laf and Gille saw that they had not enough men to be a match for Thrond and his friends' host; they chose rather to handsel the whole matter to Thrond for him to make the award; and he gave his award at once, saying that he could do it as well then as later. "This is my award,' says he; "first, I will that my kinsmen be free to dwell in the Færeys where they like, though they have been driven out of the land. Weregeld I will take none from either side. The lordship over the Færeys I will settle in this way. I will have one third, Laf shall have another, and the sons of Sigmund the third, for this lordship has long been a bone of contention, a cause of ill-will. And I will offer thee, fosterson Laf," said Thrond, "to foster thy son Sigmund, and this I will do for thine own good. "Laf answered, "As to the fostering of the child, that shall be as Thora wills, whether she will have her son go to thee or abide with us. "So they parted. When Thora heard of the fostering, she said, "It may be that this looks otherwise to me than it does to you, but I cannot but choose this fosterage for my son Sigmund, if I am to have my way, for methinks Thrond in many ways outdoes other men. "So Sigmund, the son of Thora and Laf, went to Gate to be fostered by Thrond. He was then three winters old, and bid fair to become a fine man; and there he grew up.

Chapter 49

In the days when Sweyn was king in Norway and Alfifa his mother with him, Thrond was at home in Gate, and his kinsmen Sigurd, Thord, and Geat the Red with him. It was said that Thrond was never married; howbeit he had a daughter whose name was Gudrun. When Thrond's kinsmen had been there some time, he fell into talk with them, and told them that he would not have them there any longer

with their unthrift and idleness. Sigurd answered him ill, saying that he did nought but evil to all his kinsmen, and that he was sitting withal in their father's heritage. So they goaded each other to rage with hard words. And after this the three kinsmen left and went away into Streamsey, that is the thickest dwelt in of all the Færeys.

A certain man had his dwelling there, whose name was Thorhall the Wealthy; he had a wife whose name was Birna; she was forenamed Streamsey-Birna; she was a very proud, handsome woman. Thorhall was then an old man. Birna had been wedded to him for the sake of his goods. Thorhall had money out on loan with nearly every man about, and got little for it in most cases. Sigurd, Thord, and Geat came to Streamsey and went up to talk with Thorhall. Sigurd offered him to get in his money from those who paid him worst, if he would give them the half of all he got; but if he had to go to law with them, he was to have what was needed for going to law paid besides, and the franklin was to have half of what he got. Thorhall thought it a hard bargain, but they drove it at last. And now Sigurd would go far and wide on the Færeys getting together Thorhall's money, and going to law over it when he thought it needful to do so; so that he soon got together a great deal of money and became very wealthy. Sigurd and all those kinsmen were now with Thorhall for a long time. Sigurd and Birna would be often talking together, and men said that all was not right between them. They were there all the winter. In the spring Sigurd told Thorhall that he should like to set up housekeeping with him, but Thorhall was not very eager over it, till the goodwife put in her word, then the goodman gave in and let her have her way. They took their own way greedily. Thorhall was thrown overboard, and she and Sigurd managed everything just as they liked.

Chapter 50

That summer it happened that a ship came out to the Færeys and was knocked to pieces off Southrey, and much of the lading was lost. There were twelve men on board, and five were lost, but seven came safe to land. One of these was called Hafgrim, and Bearngrim and Hergrim were with him; they were all brothers, and masters of the ship. They were hard put to it for food and everything else that they needed. Sigurd, Thord, and Geat went to meet them, and Sigurd said that they were in evil plight and bade them all home to his house. Thorhall talked to Birna about it, and said that he thought it was a rash thing to do. Sigurd said he would keep them at his own smart. So there they abode, and were right well kept, yea, better than Thorhall. Goodman Thorhall was stingy, and there were often words between him and Bearngrim. One evening, as men were sitting in the hall, goodman Thorhall and Bearngrim had words. Thorhall was sitting on a bench and he had a stick in his hand; he was waiving it about talking angrily, and his sight was bad, and the staff came down on Bearngrim's nose. He grew mad with rage, and caught at his axe to drive it into Thorhall's head. Sigurd leapt up at once and caught hold of Bearngrim, and said that he would set them at one, and brought it about that they were set at one. They were there all through the winter, but they were never very friendly with Thorhall after that. The winter passed; then Sigurd said that he would give them something towards their cruise, and gave them a good merchant-ship which he and Thorhall owned together. Thorhall took this very ill till the goodwife talked him over. Sigurd gave them food for their cruise also, and they went on board; they lay on board their ship all night, but lived at the homestead in the daytime. When they were bound, it happened one morning that they went up to the homestead. Sigurd was not at home that day, but abroad on his stewardship after some business that was pressing. They were up there all day. But when Sigurd came home and went to meat, the merchants had already gone down to their ship. When Sigurd sat down to the board he asked where yeoman Thorhall was; they told him he must be asleep. "It is an unkindly sleep," says Sigurd. "Is he clad or not?We will wait for him to meat. "Then they went to the hall, and there lay Thorhall in his bed fast asleep. When they told Sigurd this, he sprang up and went to Thorhall's room, and it was soon seen that Thorhall was dead. Sigurd stripped the clothes off him, and saw that the bed was bloody all over, and found a wound under his left arm. He had been

smitten to the heart with a thin blade. Sigurd said this was the worst of evil deeds, and that that wretch Bearngrim must have done it, thinking to revenge himself for the blow he got from the stick. "And we will now go down to the ship and be revenged on them, if we can. "The kinsmen took their weapons, Sigurd having a great axe in his hand, and ran down to the ship. Sigurd called out in wrath and sprang on board the ship. The brothers jumped up at once when they heard the cursing and swearing. Sigurd ran at Bearngrim and hewed straight at his breast with the axe in both hands, so that the axe-blade went right into his body, and so he got his death wound. Thord the Low hewed at Hafgrim's shoulder with his sword, and clove him down to the ribs, so that his arm fell down, and there he got his death. Geat the Red hewed at Hergrim's head with his axe, and clove him down to the shoulders. When they three were all dead, Sigurd said that they would go no further with the others that were yet alive, but that he would have the goods the brothers had left; and right little it was. Sigurd and his kinsmen went home with the goods, and Sigurd makes out that he has well avenged goodman Thorhall. Nevertheless Sigurd and his kinsmen were ill-spoken of in the matter of the slaying of Thorhall.

Sigurd now took Birna to wife, and set up his homestead with her. Thorhall and Birna had a good many children.

Chapter 51

Thorwald was the name of a man that dwelt in Sandey; his wife's name was Thorbera. He was a wealthy man in goods and chattels, and was stricken in years when these things came to pass. Geat the Red came to Thorwald and offered to gather in his money for him, for he got little profit from the money he let out, and the bargain they made was of the same kind as the one between Thorhall and Sigurd. Geat stayed with Thorwald as much as with Sigurd, and it was soon said that Geat had beguiled Thorwald's wife: he got together a good deal of money. Once upon a time a man came to the homestead with whom Thorwald had money out on loan; he was a fisherman. It was in the evening, and it was dark in the hall where men were sitting. Thorwald asked the fisherman for his money, but he answered him slowly and rather ill. Geat was walking up the room in the dark with some of the men, and when they looked least for it, Thorwald cried out, "Most wretched man, wilt thou drive thy knife into the breast of an old and sackless man?"then he fell back against the wainscot dead.

When Geat heard this, he ran straight at the fisherman and smote him his death-blow on the spot, saying that he should do no more ill deeds. Afterwards Geat sat down in the homestead with the widow and took her to wife.

Chapter 52

There was a man whose name was Laf; he was the son of Thore Beine's son; he went merchant-cruises between Norway and the Færeys, and did very well. When he was in the Færeys, he used by turns to stay with Laf Ossursson and with Thurid the Mighty Widow and her sons. Now, once upon a time it happened, when Laf Thoresson came out with his ship to the Færeys, that Sigurd Thorlacsson bade him home to his house in Streamsey, and they settled he should go. Laf Ossursson came down to the ship, and was not very well pleased that his namesake had settled to stay with Sigurd. He said it was not by his counsel that he should go, and told him that he might have had free quarters in Southrey with him. Laf said it must be now as it was fixed, and went to stay with Sigurd, and Sigurd set him next himself, and treated him well; and he was through the winter with him, and held in great honour.

Chapter 53

One day in the following spring, as it is told, Sigurd said that he was going out to get in his money from a neighbour of his whose name was Beorn. "And I would fain have thee, Laf, go with me, that thou mayest stand between us; for Beorn is very short-tempered, and I have long lacked my money at his hands. "Laf said that he would go as he wished. So they twain walked together to Beorn’s, and Sigurd asked for his money, but Beorn answered him ill. With that a great stir began, and Beorn hewed at Sigurd, but Laf ran between them, and Beorn’s axe came down on Laf’s head, and that stroke was the death of him then and there. Sigurd ran at Beorn and dealt him his death blow. These tidings were now spread abroad. Sigurd was the only man who could tell the truth about it, and he became evil-spoken of.

Thurid the Mighty Widow and Thora her daughter taunted Laf Ossursson a good deal, saying that he would never lift his hands, no matter what shame was laid upon them; and showed him coldness and hatred; and he bore it well and manfully: but they said that his forbearance sprang from cowardice and lack of heart. The two kinswomen took the death of Laf Thore’s son very deeply to heart, thinking that of a surety Sigurd had slain him.

It is told that on a time goodwife Thurid dreamed that Sigmund Brestesson, her husband, came to her in his guise as he had lived and spake to her, saying, "It is as it seems to thee; and I am come hither, having got leave from God himself. But do thou think neither ill nor hardly of Laf, thy daughter’s husband, for it is fated that he shall avenge the wrongs of you both. "After this Thurid awoke, and told her dream to her daughter, Thora, and from thenceforth they behaved better to Laf than before.

Chapter 54

It must next be told that a ship came over the main to the Færeys and lay off Streamsey, not far from Sigurd’s homestead. They were Northmen, and the master’s name was Arnleot; they were eighteen in all on board. A man whose name was Scafte dwelt hard by the ship’s berth. He worked for the chapmen and served them well, and they behaved well to him. The master fell to talk with Scafte, and thus he spake: "I will tell thee what is in my heart," says he. "They were my sons, Bearngrim and his brothers, whom Sigurd Thorlacsson slew, and I would fain have thee with me in this matter, that I may get at Sigurd and his mates and avenge my sons. Scafte said that he owed Sigurd no goodwill, and promised Arnleot that he would give him warning when they might best get hold of them. Now, upon a day in the summer, the three kinsmen, Sigurd, Thord, and Geat, took a boat and fared out to an island to get some sheep for slaughtering, for it is the wont of the Færey folk to have fresh meat at all seasons. And when they had put to sea, Scafte gave Arnleot warning thereof. Then the merchantmen gat them ready at once and set out, fifteen of them, in the ship’s boat, and reached the island where Sigurd and his kinsmen were, and landed, twelve of them together, but three watched the boat. When Sigurd and his kinsmen saw the men that had landed on the island, they talked among themselves as to who they could be. They could see that they were in light raiment and weaponed. "May be," said Sigurd, "these are the chapmen that have lain here all the summer, and they may have some other errand than to chaffer with us, for they must be seeking us; so let us make ready for them. We will go to meet them, and follow Sigmund Brestesson’s plan --- let every man run down his own way, and let us all meet at our boat. "So they went to meet each other. Arnleot egged on his shipmates, bidding them avenge his sons. Sigurd and his kinsmen ran down every man his own way, and met down on the shore at their boat. Arnleot and his men came then after them and ran at them. Sigurd hewed at the man who set on him and cut off both his legs at the knee, and so he gat his death. Thord slew another man, and Geat a third. Then they sprang on board their boat and rowed along the island, and there they came upon the ship’s boat with the three men aboard of her. Sigurd sprang into her, slew one of them,

and threw the other two into the sea. Then he took their boat, and they rowed away home with the two boats. Then he gathered men to him and went out to the island again and landed. The Eastmen ran together to try and guard themselves. Thord the Low said, "The best thing to do, kinsman Sigurd, is to give these men quarter, now we can do as we like with them, for we have done great hurt to Arnleot already. "Sigurd answered, "That is well spoken, but I will have them give up all into my hands, if they would have quarter. "And so it came to pass they gave Sigurd self-doom, and he gave Arnleot three weregelds for each [of his sons]. Arnleot was paid all of his money as weregeld for his sons and took it abroad with him out of the Færeys. He was a South-islander. Sigurd became aware also of Scafte's treason, and he told him he should have his life, but that he should go abroad out of the Færeys. So he went out to Norway, and was outlawed from the Færeys.

Chapter 55

Now this must be told, that Sigurd Thorlacsson began to egg on his brother Thord to marry. Thord asked him where he saw a wife that would do for him. "I will not pass over the woman," says Sigurd, "whom I think the best match in the Færeys, namely, Thurid the Mighty Widow. ""I don't aim so high," says Thord. "Thou wilt never wed any one without asking," says Sigurd. "I will not try this, and she will be far enough from wishing to wed me," said Thord; "but thou shalt try it if thou wilt. "So next day Sigurd fared over to Scufey, and told his tale to Thurid. She did not answer him at once, but he pleaded his cause, and it went so far that she promised she would talk it over with her friends and sons, and that she would send him word how things stood then. So Sigurd fared home with that, and said her answer was likely enough. "That is wonderful indeed," says Thord, "and I rather suspect she was not saying what she thought. "Thurid went to Laf her son-in-law and Thora her daughter, and told them of her wooing. Thora asked what she had answered. She said she had spoken strongly against it, but less strongly than she thought. "But what dost thou think the best thing to do, daughter?"She answered, "Thou shalt not say no, if I am to have my way in the matter, if it is at all in your mind to work for revenge on them that have shamed us, and I do not see any other bait by which they are more likely to be caught than this. I need not put words into my mother's mouth, since she has before her many ways to bring it about that they do not have their will this time. "Laf was of the same mind as Thora in this matter, and said that he would take thought how they might set about giving them what they deserved. Then they appointed a day for them to come and look after this business. Then Laf said, "Thrond foresaw this long ago when he offered to foster our son, and I hold thee guilty in this matter, Thora; and it will be death of our son Sigmund if he is with Thrond and anything falls out between us and Sigurd. ""I don't mean him to be much longer there," said Thora, "and the thing is for us to go to Eastrey, where thou shalt see thy foster-father, Thrond. "They all thought this the best thing.

Chapter 56

Laf and they all set out together, seven of them, on board the boat, and got to Eastrey. They had the water coming into the boat all day, and Laf and his men were very wet, but Thora was dry. They went up to the homestead at Gate, and Thrond welcomed them, and bade kindle a fire for Laf and the men; but Thora was led into a room where the boy Sigmund, her son, should be with her. He was then nine years old, and very quick and big to look at. His mother asked him what Thrond had taught him, and he said that he had learned "how to bring all kinds of lawsuits, and to get my own rights and those of others. "And all this he had clear in his head. Then she asked what his foster-father had taught him of Holy Faith. Sigmund said that he had learned the Pater Noster and Creed. She said she would like to hear them, and he did as she wished; and it seemed to her that he sang the Pater Noster through pretty well, but Thrond's creed was ---

"[God giveth angels]: I walk not alone;

These follow my feet: five of God’s angels:

A prayer for myself I pray: they bear my prayer o Christ:

Psalms seven I sing: God see to my lot!"

While he was singing thus, Thrond came into the room and asked what they were talking about. Thora answered and said that Sigmund her son had been showing her the lore he had taught him. "And methinks the Creed is not of the right kind," says she. "It was so, as thou knowest," says Thrond, "that Christ had twelve disciples, or more, and each of them had his own creed: so also I have my creed, and thou hast the one that thou hast learnt. And there are creeds many, and they need not all be alike to be right. "So their talk ended.

In the evening they were treated like guests in the best way, and there was hard drinking, and Thrond was very merry. Thrond told them that they would lodge them in the room, and make a bed for them on the floor. Laf said that would do very well. Thora said that she wished Sigmund to sleep with her that night, that he might tell her of all he had learnt. "That cannot be," says Thrond, "for then I should never sleep all night. ""Thou wilt let this be to please me, my dear Thrond," she says. And so it came about that the boy slept with her and Laf.

Now Thrond had a little chamber for himself, and he always slept there and the boy by his side, and few beside. And Thrond went to his chamber, and it was then deep in the night. Laf made ready to sleep and lay down and turned from his wife. She stretched forth her hand to his back and bade him not sleep. "Stand up," says she, "and go round about Eastrey tonight, and scuttle every boat so that there be not one seaworthy. And so they did. Laf knew every creek there, and they scuttled every craft that could float, so that it was not seaworthy. They did not sleep that night, and early in the morning they rose, and Thora and Sigmund went down to the boat, but Laf walked over to the chamber and bade Thrond farewell, and thanked him for his good welcome, and told him that Thora wished Sigmund to go home with her. Thrond had slept little that night; he said that that might not be --- that Sigmund should go away. Then Laf walked hastily down to the boat, but now Thrond thought he could see Laf’s whole plan. So he bade his house-carles take a row-boat he had and man her well. They did so, but in came the coal-black sea, and they were fain to get to land. There was not a seaworthy craft on the island, so that Thrond must need bide there whether he liked it or not. Laf went on till he reached home, and then he gathered men to him. This was the day before that on which Sigurd and Thord were to meet them.

Chapter 57

Now of Sigurd Thorlaksson and his kinsmen it must be told that they got ready on the day to leave home, and Sigurd urged them on to be smart. Thord says that he is little bent on going, "And I think thou must be fey," says he, "since thou art so mightily stirring over this matter. ""Be not so strange!"says Sigurd, "and be not so afraid where is no jeopardy. But do not let us advisedly break the appointment that we have agreed upon together. ""Thou shalt have thy way," says Thord, "but it will not come on me unawares if we do not all get back in the evening whole. "They set out in a boat, twelve of them together, well weaponed all. They had stormy weather through the day and a terrible stream, but they bore up well and made Scufey. Then Thord said that he would go no farther. Sigurd said he would go up to the homestead, if he went up alone, but Thord said he must be fey. So Sigurd landed; he was clad in a red kirtle, and he had a blue tie-mantle on his shoulders; he was girt with a sword and had a helm on his head. He went up the island, and when he drew nigh to the house, he saw

that the doors were to. The church that Sigmund had built stood in the garth over against the doors, and as Sigurd came up between the big house and the church, he saw that the church was open, and that a woman in a red kirtle and a blue mantle over her shoulders was coming out of it. Sigurd knew that it was goodwife Thurid, and walked up to her. She greeted him blithely, and they went up to a tree that lay in the garth, and sat them down on the tree together. She wished to turn towards the church, but he wished to turn towards the house-doors with his back to the church, but she had her way, and they had their faces towards the church. Sigurd asked her what men there were come there. She said there were very few. He asked her then if Laf were there. She said he was not there. "Are thy sons at home?" says he. "One may say so," says she. "What have they said about our business lately?"said Sigurd. "We have talked it over," says she, "and all we women think best of thee, and there would be little refusal of my hand if thou wert unfettered!""Then I have missed a great match," says Sigurd, "but it will not take much time to make me a free man. ""That is as may be," says she. Then he tried to draw her to him and got hold of her hands, but she gathered the tie-mantle to her, and with that the door opened and a man leapt out with a drawn sword. It was Here Sigmundsson. When Sigurd saw him he ducked down out of the mantle and so got loose, but Thurid still kept hold of the mantle. By this time more men were come out; so Sigurd leapt over the wall. Here caught up a spear and leapt over the wall after him, and he was the swiftest. Then he shot the spear at Sigurd; but when Sigurd saw that the spear was coming at his shoulders, he throw himself down on the ground, and the spear flew over him and stuck in the ground. Sigurd jumped up at once, caught up the spear and sent it back, and it hit Here in the middle of his body, and he gat his death at once. Then Sigurd ran down the little path; but when Laf came up where Here lay, he turned sharp off and ran down the island, and sprung off the first place he came to; and men say that it is fifteen fathoms down to the shore from where he leapt off. Laf came down on his feet, and ran out to the brothers’ ship. By this time Sigurd had got up to the boat, and was just springing on board when Laf drove his sword at him and smote at his side, and he turned against him and the sword went into his body, as it seemed to Laf. Then Sigurd sprang on board the boat, and they put off from land; and so they parted. Laf went up the island to his men, and bade them get on board as quickly as they could, "for we will hold on after them. "They asked him if he knew of Here’s death, and whether he had lit on Sigurd. He said he had no time now for much talking. They got on board two boats. Laf had eighty men with him; and there was no small difference in the time these boats took and the other. Sigurd and his men came ashore at Streamsey; he had steered the boat himself, and had spoken little to them. As he landed from the boat Thord asked if he was badly wounded. He said he did not surely know. He went up to the boat-house wall that was near the sea, and laid his arms upon it, while the others cleared the boat, and then went up to the boat-house, and there they saw Sigurd standing stiff and dead. They bore his body home, and told no man these tidings. Then they went to supper.

And as they were at meat, Laf and his folk came up to the homestead and made an onslaught against it, and set it on fire. They defended themselves well; they were eleven in all, but there were thirty men come against them. When the fire took hold on the house, Geat ran out, for he could not bear it any longer. Stangrim Sigmundsson and two other men set on him, but he defended himself well. Geat cut at Stangrim’s knee, and hewed off his kneecap, and a great wound it was, so that he went halt ever after. He also slew one of his men with him. Then Laf Ossursson came up, and they drove at each other with their weapons, and it ended by Laf slaying Geat. Thord the Low was the next man to run out, and Brand Sigmundsson and two other men met him and set on him, and the end of their meeting was that Thord slew Brand and both his fellows. Then Laf Ossursson came up and drove the same sword through Thord that he had smitten his brother Sigurd with, and Thord died straightway.

Chapter 58

After these things Laf went home, and he became a man of renown because of these deeds; but when Thrond heard these tidings, he took it so much to heart that he died of grief. So now Laf alone ruled over all the Færeys; and this was in the days of King Magnus the Good, the son of Olave. Laf went over to Norway to see King Magnus, and took the Færeys in fee of him, and came home to the Færeys, and dwelt there till he was an old man. Sigmund his son dwelt in Southrey after his father Laf, and he was held a great man. Goodwife Thurid and Laf died in the days of King Magnus, but Thora lived on with her son Sigmund, and was always thought to be the greatest paragon of a woman. Sigmund's son was named Hafgrim, and from him are come Einar and Scegge, his sons, who were reeves over the Færeys a short while ago. Stangrim the Halt, the son of Sigmund, abode in Scufey and was held a good franklin. And it is not set down here that there has been any more to be told of Sigmund Brestesson or of them that came of him.